Anecdotes for Reflection

Part I



THE
WORLD
FEDERATION
OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

Anecdotes for Reflection

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Contents

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point

Moral stories from the lives of the prophets, the Ahlul Bayt, and their companions. Includes topics such as sincerity, hope, altruism, and independence.

Foreword

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

The concept of morality has existed since the creation of mankind. In the old days, there was a clear distinction between 'good' morals and 'bad' morals although people did not always follow the former. During modern times, the distinction between good and bad has become blurred and morality has been significantly diluted. As a result, there is a danger that immorality will prevail over morality throughout the world.

There is no excuse for a Muslim to get caught in this quagmire. There is clear guidance from God through Holy Qur'an and the Prophets and Ma'soomeen. Prophet Muhammad himself said, "I have been sent as a Prophet for the purpose of perfecting the morals." One of the best ways of understanding morality is by studying practical examples from the lives of Prophets and Ma'soomeen.

A few books have been written on moral stories emanating from the Islamic world,

one of them being ‘Pearls of Wisdom’, published by the Islamic Education Board of World Federation in March ۱۹۹۳. Bearing in mind the importance of the subject of Akhlaaqiyat, IEB-WF is publishing ‘Anecdotes for Reflection’ in ۵ parts. The

source of this publication is the book ‘Yaksad Mawzu’ wa ۵۰۰ Dastan’ by Sayyid Ali Akber Sadaaqat. The translation from Farsi to English was carried out by Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi. IEB – WF would like to thank Sayyid Ali Akber Sadaaqat and Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi for their efforts and we pray to Allah s.w.t. to reward them amply.

May Allah s.w.t. accept this work as a further attempt by IEB – WF to propagate Islam.

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Introduction

In The Name Of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Compassionate

There are numerous ways for man to achieve guidance and emerge from darkness and move towards light. God, for the prosperity of man and perfection of his morals, has created proofs, evidences and vestiges,(۱) so great in number that they are beyond reckoning and computation. For the guidance of mankind, He sent the Prophets with Clear Proofs,(۲) Books, Miracles and Signs so that, perhaps, the people might perceive the right path and attain prosperity and success.

During the entire period of his prophethood, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), with regards to refinement of souls and perfection of morals, was an exemplar in speech and deed, and had (even) said, “I have been sent (as a Prophet) for (the purpose of) perfecting the morals”(۳)

Man’s problem lies in his disregard for virtues, acquisition of vices, inclination towards lust and obedience to the Shaytan. Some men stoop so low that they even lead their

۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Ibrahim (۱۴), vs. ۵ وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنا مُوسى بِآياتِنا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُماتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

۲- Ibid, ch. Al-Hadeed (۵۷), vs. ۲۵ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنا رُسُلَنا بِالْبَيِّناتِ وَ أَنْزَلْنا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتابَ وَ الْمِيزانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

۳- Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱۱. بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكارِمَ الْأَخْلاقِ

lives akin to animals. For the purpose of refinement and treatment of human morals, abatement of rebelliousness and controlling the natural disposition, the Holy Prophet .spared no effort and mentioned all that was necessary in this regard

Attainment of prosperity in this world and the hereafter is only accomplished under the auspices of a teacher and, at the same time, not every person can completely identify the two extremes of moral behaviour in order to demonstrate the moderate and balanced path. God, Who is the Absolute Wise, introduced all the Prophets, especially the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), as the 'teacher and trainer' of morals, so that the people, by following in his footsteps, distance themselves from vices and acquire the .honour of the two worlds

The Narratives), which) اَلقَصَص In the Qur'an, there exists a chapter by the name of .itself is proof that man is in need of stories and narratives

In many places in the Qur'an, stories of Prophets, kings and nations have been mentioned. In addition, God has presented issues pertaining to wars, peace, family, religion, society and other similar topics, in the form of stories and narratives. By reading these accounts, the people can comprehend and distinguish the paths of .progress and regress, and ascent and descent in every field, especially morals

The entire chapter Yusuf has been devoted to the story of Yusuf, Ya'qub, Zulaikha :and the brothers. In the beginning of the Chapter, God says

We narrate to you (O' Prophet) the most excellent of the narratives by

(means of) what We have revealed to you this Qur'an (1)

:While, in the concluding verse of this very chapter, He says

(Indeed (there) in the histories of theirs, is a lesson for men of understanding(2)

Indeed, one of the distinguished feats of the Qur'an is this very story of Yusuf (a.s.), which it refers to as the 'best of the narratives', and at the end of which, it says: In these stories there is a lesson for those, who desire to take a moral and adopt the .path of the Perfect Men

In this regard, Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.), in Nahjul Balaghah, says to his son Imam :(.Hasan (a.s

Even though I have not reached the age, which those before me have, yet I have looked into their behaviour and reflected over the events of their lives. I walked amongst their ruins till I was as one of them. In fact, by virtue of those of their affairs that have become known to me, it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern the impure from the clean and the benefit from the harm. I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and .collected for you their good points while keeping away from you the useless ones

Years ago, I had written a book on ethics (for the treatment of vices), by the name of Ihyaa al-Quloob. Ever since, I had been reflecting over the idea

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Yusuf (۱۲), vs. ۳ نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِما أَوْحَيْنا إِلَيْكَ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ

۲- Ibid, vs. ۱۱۱ لَقَدْ كانَ فِی قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَهٌ لِأُولِی الْأَلْبابِ

of compiling a book on moral stories. It so happened that, divinely, an opportunity came up before me and with it the motivation for undertaking this assignment. In spite of the lack of necessary books, I contented myself with those that were available and commenced the compilation of this book, recording four to five stories .for every topic

I have certainly not come across any book which has been compiled in this fashion. Books like Namunah-e-Ma'arif-e-Islam and Pand-e-Taareekh have been present for around ۳۰ years and I have made use of them too (in the course of this collection), but in those books, Qur'anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies have all been accumulated together; whereas, I have sought to satisfy myself by mentioning only the stories, while abstaining from presenting considerations relating to Qur'anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies, which would not only have increased the size of the book but would also have made it difficult to understand for many of the readers. This collection caters for the general public, young and old alike, who are acquainted with basic reading and writing. As far as possible, I have endeavoured to omit scientific issues and those aspects, pertaining to traditions, whose .comprehension would be demanding and exacting for the general masses

Although some of the stories may not possibly possess any aspect of reality and actuality, what I have focused on is the admonition and 'taking-a-lesson' aspect contained in them, which hopefully, the honourable readers would

.perceive and comprehend

As far as the issue of associating a story to a particular topic is concerned, I do not claim that the stories allude to just one topic or that particular one which has been specified here; rather, there are stories which can be associated with several other .topics too, in addition to the topic under which it has been mentioned here

When narrating a text or presenting a translation, I have not restricted myself to the literal meaning but, for a better comprehension, have resorted to paraphrasing, .allusion and conceptual explanation too

To avoid interference of topics with one another and prolongation of discussion, I have refrained from bringing forth topics which are related to those already presented. For example, Ithaar (altruism) has been presented as one of the topics but .Infaaq (spending in the path of God) has been excluded

To prevent the reader from experiencing exhaustion and boredom, and for the sake of variety, I have desisted from presenting stories of a monotonous kind, like those of philosophers and poets, but have strived to make the collection varied. In this way, .the readers will, hopefully, derive a greater pleasure from the narratives

In view of the fact that trustworthiness ought to be adhered to, I have referred every narrative presented here, to the book from which it has been extracted, also mentioning the volume and page. It is only with the objective of achieving a greater fluency of work that I have endeavoured to correct, polish or alter

.some of the words or sentences of the original text

It is hoped that the readers, after going through the stories and narratives, reflect upon and take lessons from them so that they are able to create within themselves, a new impetus towards perfection of morals; and God Willing, those who are endowed with laudable morals, should relate them to others, for rectification and remedy of the .weaker souls

Sayyid Ali Akbar Sadaaqat

.And our final prayer (is): All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds

.Mordad, ۱۳۷۸

Morals .۱

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

اِنَّکَ لَعَلَى خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

(And certainly, you stand on sublime morality.)(۱)

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْاَخلَاقِ

(I have been sent (as a Prophet) to perfect the morals.(۲

Short Explanation

For man, good morals bring grace and elegance in this world, and relief and happiness in the hereafter. They elevate a person's status in proximity to God and aid him in the perfection of his religion. All the Prophets, auliya, and the chosen ones of God possessed exemplary morals and every believer ought to adorn himself with such morals, in order that his Scales of deeds become weightier on the Day of Judgement. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: The Haatim of our time is one, who possesses good

morals. Bad morals cause a person to suffer the squeezing of the grave and the .(punishment of) hell (in the hereafter), and a lack of friends in this world

Man should not be measured according to his knowledge, wealth or

p: ٧

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Qalam, vs. ۴ -١
Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ١, pg. ٢٣ -٢

position, but rather, according to his commendable attributes, which make him acceptable in the eyes of God and distinguished and praised in the eyes of people.(١)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and Noa'imaan (١)

Noa'imaan Ibn A'mr Ansaari was one of the early companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and had a jovial and jocose nature. It has been reported that a tribal Bedouin once arrived in Madinah and, resting his camel behind the mosque, entered inside to be in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

Some of the Prophet's companions incited Noa'imaan by saying, " If you kill this camel, we could distribute its meat amongst ourselves, and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) would have to pay its price to the owner."

Following their advice, Noa'imaan killed the animal. When the owner came out of the mosque and discovered his dead camel, he was furious and decided to bring the matter to the attention of the Holy Prophet. Noa'imaan, in the meantime, had taken flight.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) came out of the mosque, saw the dead camel and inquired, "Who is responsible for this act?"

Those around him accused Noa'imaan so the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) despatched someone to bring Noa'imaan before him. Word spread around that Noa'imaan was hiding in the house of Dhubaa'h Bint Zubair,(٢) which was near the mosque. He had climbed into a pit and covered himself with fresh grass. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was told about Noa'imaan's hideout and he and his companions set out towards Dhubaa'h's house. Once there, the

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١- Tadhkirah al-Haqaiq, pg. ٥٧.

٢- She was the cousin of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) and the wife of Miqdad Ibn al-Aswad

envoy revealed Noa'imaan's hideaway to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), who ordered him to uncover the pit. When it was done, Noa'imaan emerged, his cheeks and forehead covered with fresh grass. On seeing him, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked:

"O' Noa'imaan! What is this that you have done?"

He replied, "O' Prophet of Allah! By Allah! Those people who have led you to my hiding-place,were the same ones who persuaded me to kill the camel."

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) smiled and brushed away the grass from Noa'imaan's cheeks and forehead with his holy hands. He then paid the price of the camel to the Bedouin(۱) on Noa'imaan's behalf.

۲) Khuzaimah and the Roman Emperor

Khuzaimah Abrash, the Arabian king, never embarked upon any task without first conferring with the Roman Emperor who was one of his closest friends. Once, with the intention of seeking the Emperor's opinion regarding his children's fortune, he sent a letter to him with his herald. In the letter, he wrote:

"I feel I should set aside great riches for each of my sons and daughters in order that they do not fall into bad times after me. What is your opinion in this affair?"

The Roman Emperor replied: "Wealth is a sweetener - unfaithful and impermanent! The best service for your children would be to embellish them with good morals and laudable attributes, which will lead to permanent leadership in the world and forgiveness (of sins) in the hereafter."(۲)۱۱

۳) The Conduct of Imam Sajjad

Once, a relative of Imam Sajjad (a.s.) approached the Imam (a.s.) and

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۱- Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ۲۶

۲- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۶۴; Jawaame' al-Hikaayaat, pg. ۲۷۰.

began to revile and insult him. The Imam (a.s.) did not utter a word in reply but, after :the man had left the gathering, he turned to the people around him and said

You heard what this man said. Now I want you to accompany me andhear what I“ ”.have to say in response to his abuses and insults

The companions complied, “We shall surely accompany you; in fact we had hoped ”.that youwould reply to him at that very moment

The Imam (a.s.) set off towards the person’s house and was heard reciting the :following Qur’anic verse

And who restrain (their) anger, and forgive (the faults of) men; for God loves those (who do good (to others).(١)

The narrator says: “ When we heard the recitation of this verse, we realized that the Imam (a.s.) intended to exhibit goodness towards the person who had just insulted ”.him

When he reached the person’s house, the Imam (a.s.) called out to him and .announced his arrival

On seeing the Imam, the person immediately assumed that he had come to respond .to his abuses

However, as soon as the Imam (a.s.) saw the man, he said, “O’ Brother! You came to me and uttered things which were appalling and unpleasant. If what you have attributed to meis true, I seek forgiveness for myself from God, but if it is not so, then ”.I pray that God forgives you

The man was shocked to hear these words and repented. He kissed Imam Sajjad (a.s.) between the eyes and

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.Holy Qur'an, ch. Aale I’mraan (٣), vs. ١٣٤ -١

:apologised, saying

My insults and abuse were unfounded and cannot be attributed to your character. In“ fact, those insults befit me more than you.”(۱)۱۳

Imam 'Ali and the Discourteous Trader (۴

Imam Ali (a.s.), during his Calphate, would often undertake tours to survey the markets and advise and guide the traders there.

One day, while passing through the date market, he noticed that a small girl was weeping. Imam asked her the reason for her tears at which she explained:

My master had given me a dirham to purchase some dates. I purchased them from“ this trader here, but when I returned home, my master did not approve of them. Now I wish to return them but the trader refuses to take them back.”

Imam 'Ali (a.s.), turned to the trader and said to him, “This child is a slave-girl and has no authority of her own. Take back the dates and return her money to her.”

The trader stepped forward and, in full view of the other traders and onlookers, struck the Imam (a.s.) on the chest in an attempt to shove him away from the front of his shop.

:The people who were witnessing the incident, rushed forward and said to the man

”!(.What do you think you are doing? This is Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s“

The trader’s face went pale as he stood flabbergasted. He immediately took the dates from the girl and handed back the money to her.

Then, turning to the Imam (a.s.), he implored, “O’ Amirul Mu'mineen! Be pleased with me and forgive

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.Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ۲, pg. ۴ -۱

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The Imam replied, "I shall only be pleased with you when you change your behaviour for the better and pay close attention to morals and courtesy."(1)

Maalik Ashtar (5

Once, Maalik Ashtar was passing through the market of Kufah looking very indigent. He was dressed in coarse canvas apparel and had placed canvas on his head instead of a turban. One of the traders was sitting in his shop when his eyes fell upon Maalik. He looked at him with contempt and scornfully hurled a lump of earth towards him.

Maalik disregarded him and proceeded on his way. However, a person who had recognized Malik and had witnessed the incident, reprimanded the trader:

"Shame on you! Do you know who you have just humiliated?"

"No," replied the trader.

"He was Maalik Ashtar, the companion of 'Ali (a.s)."

A shiver ran through the body of the trader at the thought of the evil deed he had committed. He immediately set off after Maalik in order to offer his apologies. He noticed that Maalik had entered a mosque where he was engaged in prayers and decided to wait for him. As soon as Maalik had finished praying, the trader fell at his feet and began kissing them. Maalik raised him and asked him what he was doing.

" I am apologizing for the sin I have committed," answered the trader.

Maalik explained, "There is no sin upon you. By God, I came to the mosque especially to seek forgiveness for you."(2)

۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۶; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۹, pg. ۵۱۹.

۲- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۱۲; Majmua'h Warraam Ibn Abi Farraas.

Beneficence .۲

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّ اللهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا وَ الَّذِينَ هُم مُحسِنُونَ

Surely Allah is with those who guard (against evil) and those who do good (to) (others).(۱)

:Imam 'Ali (a.s.) has stated

عاَتِب اَخاَكَ بِالإِحساَنِ اِلَيهِ

(Admonish your brother (in faith) by exhibiting kindness towards him.)(۲)

Short Explanation

Allah loves the person who possesses the attribute of beneficence. Just as Allah has exhibited kindness towards us, it is essential for us to exhibit a greater beneficence .towards others

Even if a person has wronged us, we should respond with kindness and not repay evil with evil, as this would only add fuel to the fire and cause an increase in malice and .enmity

The conduct of Divine personalities was such that if they were greeted, they would return the greeting in a better and more complete manner and if goodness was done .to them, they would repay it, augmented and amplified

Those who do goodness and exhibit beneficence towards others, attract the hearts of .the people, while their deeds hurt Shaytan

It should be noted that those who do good do not devalue or spoil their kind deeds by .(placing any kind of obligation (upon the person towards whom kindness is exhibited

Imam Husain's Kindness to the Camel-Driver (۱

:Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said

A man was trailing a woman when she was busy circling the Ka’bah. The woman was“ raising her hands in prayer when the man placed his hand upon her arm; at that moment God glued his hand to the women’s arm.

People thronged to witness this strange happening in such great numbers that

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Nahl (۱۶), vs. ۱۲۸.

۲- Nahjul Balaghah (Faidh al-Islam), pg. ۱۱۶۵.

all movement was hindered. A person was sent to the Emir of Makkah to inform him of the incident. He gathered all the scholars around him and together they tried to settle on a suitable resolution to the problem. Many ordinary people also assembled, .interested to know the sentence that would be pronounced for this crime

As they all stood perplexed over the issue, the Emir finally said, "Is there anyone from "?the family of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w) here

".Those around him said, "Yes! Husain Ibn 'Ali (a.s.) is here

That night, the Emir ordered the Imam (a.s.) to be brought before him. He sought to .(.know the ruling for this incident from the Imam (a.s

First, the Imam (a.s.) turned towards the Ka'bah and raised his hands. He stood in this position for a while, after which he supplicated. Then, approaching the man the Imam .separated his glued hand from the arm of the woman by the power of his Imamate

"?The Emir asked the Imam (a.s.), "O' Husain (a.s.)! Should I not punish him

.(.No," replied the Imam (a.s"

The author says: This was the kindness which the Imam (a.s.) had exhibited towards the camel-driver, but it was the same person who repaid this act of kindness by cutting off the Imam's hands in order to snatch his (a.s.) belt, in the darkness of the (night of ١١th Muharram.(١

Abu Ayyub Ansaari (٢

Abu Ayyub Ansaari was one of the distinguished companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). When the Holy

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.Raahnama-e-Sa'adat, vol. ١, pg. ٣۶; Shajarah-e-Tuba, pg. ۴٢٢ -١

Prophet (s.a.w.) migrated from Makkah to Madinah, all the tribes of Madinah :requested him to stay with them, but he said

".The place where I stay shall depend on where my camel sits down"

When the procession reached a place near the houses of Bani Maalik Ibn Najjar, which later came to house the door of the Prophet's mosque, the camel sat down to rest. But a short while later it stood up again and began to walk, only to return and .rest at the place where it had previously rested

The people began approaching the Holy Prophet (s.a.w), and inviting him to be their guest. Seeing this, Abu Ayyub immediately lifted the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) saddlebag .from the camel's back and carried it into his own house

When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) noticed that the saddlebag was missing, he inquired, "?"What has happened to the saddle-bag

.Those around him informed him that Abu Ayyub had taken it into his own house

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) remarked: "A person should alwaysaccompany his luggage," and then proceeded into Abu Ayyub's house and stayed there till the time when the .houses around the mosque were constructed

Initially, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was accommodated in a room on the ground floor, :whereas Abu Ayyub occupied the top storey, but later, he requested

O' Messenger of Allah! It is unbecoming that you stay below, while we occupy the top" ".storey; it would be more appropriate if you were to move to the top

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) agreed and

.asked for his things to be moved to the top

Abu Ayyub was in the ranks of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and participated in battles like Badr and Uhud, fighting against the enemies of Islam and putting on a scintillating .exhibition of valour and courage

One night, on the way back home after victory in the battle of Khaibar, Abu Ayyub .(.stayed awake the entire night, guarding the tent of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w

"?When morning dawned, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) inquired: "Who is out there

.It's me, Abu Ayyub," came the reply"

"!The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) twice said, "May Allah exhibit mercy upon you

Thus, Abu Ayyub, through the kindness he showed to the Prophet, both with his money and his soul, became the beneficiary of this supplication of the Holy Prophet ((s.a.w.).(١

Recompense for the Poems (٣

One Nawroz day, Mansur Dawaaniqi, the Abbasid Caliph who took over the caliphate after his brother Abu al-A'bbas Saffaah, ordered Imam Musa Kadhim (a.s.) to present himself in the gathering of the Eid of Nawroz. This was so that the people could come .and greet him and offer their gifts to him, which he should accept

The Imam (a.s.) told Mansur, "Nawroz is the customary Eid of the Iranians and nothing ".has been said about it in Islam

To which Mansur replied, "This act is politically motivated and is intended to keep my soldiers happy. I place you under the oath of the Great God that you accept my ".request and present yourself at that gathering

The Imam (a.s.) agreed and arrived

.Payghambar Wa Yaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۰-۲۷; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۶, pg. ۵۵۴ -۱

at the assembly. The army generals, nobles and the common masses arrived in his august presence, greeted him, and presented their gifts to him.

In the meantime, Mansur had ordered one of his slaves to position himself near the Imam (a.s.) and maintain a record of the money and gifts presented to him. The last person who had come to meet the Imam (a.s.) was an old man, who said to him:

"O' Son of the Messenger of Allah! I am an impoverished person and lack the money to present you with gifts, but my gift for you today are three verses of elegy, which my grandfather had composed for your grandfather, Husain Ibn Ali(a.s.)."

Having said this, he then recited the verses.(١)

The Imam (a.s.) responded appreciatively, saying, "I have accepted your gift," after which he prayed for the man.

Then, turning to the slave, he instructed, "Go to Mansur, inform him of these gifts and ask him what has to be done about them?"

The slave did as he was told and upon returning, said to the Imam (a.s.):

"The Caliph has said: I have given them to you (Imam Musa Kadhim) as gifts. Spend them as you desire."

The Imam (a.s.) told the old man, "Take these riches and gifts, for I am giving them all to you as gifts."(٢)

۴) Prophet Yusuf and his Brothers

Years after the incident when the brothers of Yusuf (a.s.) had deceptively taken him outside the city, beaten him and flung him into the well thereby forcing their father into perpetual weeping and

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١- عَجِبتُ لِمَصقُولٍ عَلاَكَ فِرِندُهُ   يَوْمَ الْهِياَجِ عَلاَكَ غُبار

.Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ٢, pg. ١٨٧ -٢

anguish over his loss, the brothers heard that Yusuf had become the king of Misr. .They and their father went to meet him

The very first sentence which Yusuf uttered upon seeing them, was: And He was (indeed kind to me when He took me out of the prison.(١)

Apparently, it was out of courtesy that Yusuf desisted from mentioning the troubles he had experienced; first being flung into the well, then his subsequent slavery and then unpleasant incidents, which he had to endure due to the acts of his brothers. He did not wish to revive those bitter memories, which would cause them to experience .mortification and embarrassment

He then added, "It was Shaitan who incited my brothers to commit those inappropriate deeds towards me, hurling me into the well and separating me from my father; however, the Glorious God exhibited kindness towards me in that he made "!those very acts a means for granting eminence and reverence to our family

Attributing the unjust acts of his brothers to Shaytan and regarding him as the prime culprit for the crimes of his brothers, was another example of Yusuf's (a.s.) magnanimity. He thus shielded them from embarrassment and left them with an .opportunity to apologize for their deeds

:He said

"There shall be no reproof against you, (from) this day(٢) You can rest assured with respect to me, for I have forgiven you and chosen to disregard all that has happened previously, and on behalf of God too, I can give you this good news

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١- Holy Qur'an, ch. Yusuf (١٢), vs. ١٠٠.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Yusuf (١٢), vs. ٩٢.

and seek from Him that Allah may forgive you and He is the Most Merciful of the .(merciful(١

Surely he who guards (against evil) and is patient (is rewarded(٢)) for surely Allah" (does not waste the reward of those who do good."(٣

Author's note: The lesson, which Hadhrat Yusuf (a.s.) taught everyone, was that of exhibiting kindness and beneficence in response to evil behaviour, and hopefully, we too can conduct ourselves in the same manner with respect to our brethren-in-faith, .Inshaallah

Sincerity.٣

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَاعْبُدِ اللهَ مُخْلِصاً لَهُ الدِّيْن

((So worship God (alone), being sincere to Him in religion(٤)

:Imam Ali (a.s.) said

أَخْلِصِ الْعَمَلَ يُجْزِكَ مِنْهُ الْقَلِيْلُ

Perform your deeds with sincerity, for (then, even) a slight of it shall be sufficient for (you.(٥

Short Explanation

Sincerity is the key to the acceptance of all deeds. A person whose deeds are accepted by Allah, however trivial they may be, is a sincere person and one whose .deeds, in spite of being plentiful are rejected by Allah, is not of the sincere ones

A sincere person strives to purify his soul from vices and exerts himself to perform .(good) deeds and maintain (sincerity of) intention so that Allah accepts his deeds

The level of intention, knowledge and deeds is related to spiritual purification and

refinement, and if a sincere person were to pay due attention to his inner self, he would come to perceive the true concept of Unity of God. The lowest degree of sincerity is when a person exerts himself to the best of

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١- Ibid, vs. ٩٢.

٢- Ibid, vs. ٩٠ مَن يَتَّقِ وَ يَصبر فإنَّ اللهَ لاَ يُضِيعُ اَجرَ الْمُحسِنِين

٣- Taareekh-e-Anbiya, pg. ٣٣٤-٣٤٧.

٤- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Zumar (٣٩), vs. ٢.

٥- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ٢, pg. ٤٠٤.

his ability, neither anticipating rewards for his deeds nor attaching any importance to them.(1)

Three Persons in a Cave (1

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has related

"Three persons from the tribe of Bani Israel got together and started out on a journey. On the way, clouds gathered above them and it started to pour with rain and so they sought shelter in a nearby cave.

Suddenly, a large boulder slipped and blocked the entrance to the cave, trapping the three inside and transforming the day into a dark night for them. They had no other alternative except to turn to God for help.

"Let us use our sincere deeds as a means to obtain deliverance from this predicament," suggested one of them.

All the others agreed with the suggestion.

One of them said, "O' Lord! You are aware that I have an extremely attractive cousin and that I was infatuated and obsessed with her. One day, finding her alone, I took hold of her and wanted to satisfy my carnal desires, when she spoke out to me saying: O' My cousin!Fear God and do not harm my chastity'. Hearing this, I crushed my lustful tendencies anddecided against the evil act. O' Lord! If that deed of mine had been out of absolute sincerityand only for the purpose of acquiring Your pleasure, deliver us from grief and perdition." Suddenly they witnessed that the huge boulder had moved away a little, faintly brightening up the interior of the cave.

The second person spoke out,"O' Lord! You know that

١- Tadhkirah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ٧٣.

I had a father and a mother, so old that their bodies had bent over due to their excessive age, and that I used to tend to them regularly. One night, having brought them their food, I observed that both of them were asleep. I passed the entire night near them, the food in hand, without waking them up for fear of disturbing them. O' Lord! If this deed of mine had been only for the sake of Your pleasure and happiness, open up a way for us and grant us salvation."

As he completed his speech, the group noticed that the boulder had moved aside a little more.

The third person supplicated, "O' Knower of every hidden and manifest! You know Yourself that I had a worker who used to work for me. When his term had reached its termination, I handed over to him his wages, but he was not pleased and desired more and, in a state of dissatisfaction and displeasure, he went away. I used his wage to purchase a goat, which I looked after separately and very soon I had a flock in my possession. After a period of time,the worker again approached me for his wage and I pointed towards the flock of sheep.Initially, he thought I was ridiculing him, but later, realizing my seriousness, took the entireflock and left.(١) O' Lord! If this act had been prompted by sincerity and had only been for

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١- In the book Mahaasin, it has been mentioned that his wage was half a dirham but when he returned to collect it, he was given eighteen thousand times over!

".Your pleasure, deliver us from this quandary

At this point the entire boulder moved aside from the mouth of the cave and all three (emerged from it, joyous and ecstatic, and continued their journey.(١

Ali on the Chest of Amr (٢

A'mr Ibn A'bd Wudd was a warrior who, in battle, was a match for a thousand soldiers. In the battle of Ahzaab, he challenged the Muslim soldiers to fight him but none possessed the courage to stand up before him till Imam Ali (a.s.) presented himself .before the Holy Prophet (sa.w) and sought permission to fight him

".The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said to Ali, "Do realize that this is A'mr Ibn A'bd Wudd

Imam Ali (a.s.) humbly stated, "(And) I am Ali Ibn Abi Talib,"and then proceeded .towards the battle-field and stood before A'mr

After a fierce encounter, Imam Ali (a.s.) eventually knocked him down and sat on his (chest.(٢

Witnessing this, the entire Muslim army importuned the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.): "O' ".Messenger of Allah, order Ali (a.s.) to kill A'mr immediately

Leave him alone for he is more aware of his deeds than anyone else," replied the" (.Holy Prophet (s.a.w

When Ali (a.s.) had severed the head of A'mr, he brought it to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), who questioned him (peace be upon him), "O' Ali! What caused you to hesitate before "?killing A'mr

He said, "O' Messenger of Allah! When I had floored him, he abused me, as a result of which I was overcome by rage. I feared that if I were to kill him in that

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Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ١, pg. ٥٣; Farajun Ba'd al-Shiddah, pg. ٢٣; Mahaasin-e- - ١

.Barqi, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۵۳

Mowlana, in his Mathnawi, has composed a poem over the incident, which is as - ۲
follows: از علی آموز اخلاص عمل   شیر حق را دان منزه از دغل در غزا بر پهلوانی دست یافت   زود شمشیر
برآورد و شتافت او خدو انداخت بر روی علی   افتخار هر نبی و هر ولی

state of anger, it would be for consoling myself and pacifying my soul. So I stepped away from him till my fury subsided when I returned to sever his head from his body ".only for the happiness of Allah and in obedience to Him

It was because of this sincerity and invaluable combat on the part of Imam Ali that the :Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

The strike of the sword of Ali on the day of the battle of Khandaq is superior to the" (worship of all men and jinn.(1)(2

Shaitan and the Pious Worshipper (3

In the tribe of Bani Israel, there once lived a pious worshipper. One day, the people informed him that at a certain location, there existed a tree that was being worshipped by a tribe. When he heard this, the man flew into a rage, picked up his axe .and set out to cut down the tree

Iblees, appearing before him in the form of an old man, asked, "Where are you headed for?" He replied, "I intend to cut down the tree, which is being worshipped so (that the people worship Allah instead."(3

.Hold yourself till you hear what I have to say," said Iblees to him"

.The worshipper urged him to carry on

Iblees continued, "God has His own Prophets and if it had been essential to cutdown ".the tree, He would have sent them to perform the task

.However, the worshipper did not agree with Iblees and continued on his way

There is no way I shall let you do it," said Iblees"

١- ضَرْبَهُ عَلِيٍّ يَوْمَ خَنْدَق أَفْضَلُ مِنْ عِبَادَهِ الثَّقَلَيْن

٢- .Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۵, pg. ١٩٩; Anwaar al-Nu'maaniyyah; A'in al-Hayaah

٣ - Iblees means the ‘carnal soul’, while the pious worshipper alludes to the ‘pure innate and soul’.

angrily, and he began to wrestle with the man. In the ensuing contest, the pious .worshipper hurled Iblees onto the ground

Wait! I have something else to say to you", pleaded Iblees. "Listen! You are a poor" man. If you could possess some wealth by means of which you could give alms to the other worshippers it would be much better than cutting the tree. If you refrain from ".cutting the tree, I shall place two dinars beneath your pillow everyday

The pious person said thoughtfully, "If you speak the truth, I shall give one dinar in charity while the other dinar I shall put to my use. This is better than cutting down the tree; in any case, I have neither been ordered to perform this task nor am I a Prophet ".to burden myself with unnecessarygrief and anxiety

.Thus, he acceded to the request of Shaitan who left him alone

For two days, he received the two dinars and utilized them, but on the third day, there was no sign of the money. Upset and distressed, he picked up his axe and set out to .cut down the tree

"?On the way, he encountered Shaitan, who asked him: "Where are you headed for

".I am going to cut that tree"

.There is no way you are going to do it," said Shaitan"

Once again they began to contest, but this time Iblees overcame him and hurling him to the ground, ordered, "Turn back or I shall sever your

".head from your body

The pious man said, "Leave me alone and I shall return, but tell me, how was it that I "?hadmanaged to overcome you on the previous occasion

Iblees answered, "On that occasion, you had set out only for Allah and you were sincere in your intention as a result of which, Allah subjugated me for you, but this time you were angry for your own self and for your dinars and so I could overpower (you."(۱

The Secret of a Sincere Slave (۴

:Sa'eed Ibn Musayyab narrates

One year, there was a severe famine and so the people gathered together to pray" for the rains. I looked around and my eyes fell upon a black slave, who had separated himself from the crowd and emerged on top of a small hill. I advanced in his direction and when I came near him, I noticed that his lips were moving in prayer. Hardly had .he completed his prayers, when a cloud appeared in the sky

Seeing the cloud, the black slave praised Allah and moved away. Very soon, rains .lashed us so heavily that we thought we might perish

I ran after the slave and observed that he entered the house of Imam Sajjad (a.s.). I :arrived before the Imam (a.s.) and said

".O' My Master! In your house there is a black slave; oblige me by selling him to me"

He (a.s.) replied, "O' Sa'eed! Why should I not gift him to you, instead,"and ordered the head of his slaves to bring all the servants before

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Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۵۴; Ihyaa al-U'loom, vol. ۴, pg. ۳۸۰; Riyadh al- - ۱ .Hikaayaat, pg. ۱۴۰

.me. When they had assembled, I noticed that the black slave was not amongst them

".I said, "The one whom I desire, is not amongst them

".The Imam (a.s.) said, "There remains no other slave except one

He then ordered him to be brought forth. When the slave was brought before me, I saw that he was the very person whom I had sought and so I said, "He is the one I ".need

O' Slave! Henceforth, Sa'eed is your master so go with him," instructed the Imam" .(.(a.s

The slave turned to me and asked, "What prompted you to separate me from my (master?"(۱

I replied, "When I witnessed your prayers for the rains being accepted, I wished that I ".could ownyou

When he heard this, the slave stretched out his hands in supplication and, turning his :face towards the skies, beseeched

O' My Lord! This was a secret between You and me. Now that You have divulged it, " ".grant me death and take me towards Yourself

The Imam (a.s.) and all those present, wept over the position of the slave, while I, shedding tears, came out of the house. No sooner had I reached my own house, than the Imam's (a.s.) messenger arrived and said, "Come along if you wish to takepart in ".the funeral procession of your companion

I returned to the Imam's (a.s.) house along with the messenger only to find that the (slave had passed away.(۲

Prophet Musa's Request (۵

:Prophet Musa (a.s.) once requested to God

O’ Lord! It is my wish to“

p: ۲۶

۱- ماَ حَمَلَکَ عَلَی أَنْ فَرَّقْتَ بَیْنِی وَ بَیْنَ مَوْلاَیَ

.(Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ۲, pg. ۳۸; Ithbaat al-Wasiyyah (author: Masu’di -۲

see that creature of Yours who has purified himself for your worship and who is unpolluted in his obedience towards You."

He was addressed, "O' Musa! Go near the shores of such-and-such sea in order that I may showyou what you desire to see."

Prophet Musa proceeded till he reached near the sea. Looking around, he observed that on a branch of a tree that drooped over the water, sat a bird, engrossed in the dhikr of Allah. When Musa questioned the bird about itself, the bird said:

"From the time Allah has created me, I have been on this branch, engaged in His worship and dhikr. From every dhikr of mine, there branch out a thousand other dhikr, and the pleasure which I derive from the dhikr of Allah, provides me with nourishment."

"Do you crave anything from this world?" asked Musa (a.s.).

"Yes. I yearn to taste one drop of water from this sea," replied the bird.

Musa (a.s.) exclaimed, "But there does not exist a great distance between your beak and the water! Why don't you dip your beak into it and drink it?"

The bird answered, "Out of fear lest the enjoyment derived from the water should make me heedless of the pleasure of the dhikr of my Lord."

Hearing this, Prophet Musa (a.s.) clasped his head in intense astonishment.(۱)

۴. Perseverance

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَماَ اُمِرْتَ وَ مَنْ تابَ مَعَكَ

Then stand you fast (O' Our Apostle Muhammad) (on the right path) as you are) commanded, (by

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Khazinah al-Jawaahir, pg. ۳۱۸ -۱

your Lord) as also he who has turned (to Allah) with you.)(۱)۴۰

:Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said

مَن ابْتُلِی مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ بِبَلاَءٍ فَصَبَرَ عَلَیْهِ کَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ اَجْرِ اَلْفِ شَهِیْدٍ

Every Mu’min, who happens to be afflicted with a misfortune and (then) exhibits) patience in the face of it, shall be granted rewards equivalent to that of a thousand (martyrs.)(۲

Short Explanation

.Endurance and perseverance can reduce the severity of misfortunes and calamities

A person who possesses faith does not exhibit impatience when faced with trials, lest .his faith should suffer

It has been said: A Mu’min is more resolute than a mountain. This is because he is steadfast against the enemies and displays fortitude in the face of misfortune, to the .extent that no grief ever finds a way into the heart of a perfect Mu’min

Life, with its many troubles, will not present a problem for those with a firm resolve. It is only those who lack sincerity in their perseverance who tend to break down at the slightest of calamities. After all, if the religion of God has reached us today, it is due to .(.the perseverance of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and the patience of Imam Ali (a.s

The Family of Yasir (۱

In the initial period of Islam, a small and oppressed family of four embraced the religion. Each of them displayed an incredible degree of perseverance in facing up to the ruthless tortures of the polytheists. These four persons were Yasir, his wife .Sumaiyyah and their two children A’mmar and A'bdullah

Yasir stood steadfast in his

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Hud (١١), vs. ١١٢ -١

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ٣, pg. ۴٠۴ -٢

religion, suffering the abuses of the enemies, till he eventually died. His wife Sumaiyyah, in spite of her advanced age, resolutely bore the tortures of the enemies till eventually Abu Jahl inflicted her final injury. Sumaiyyah therefore attained .martyrdom as a result of a blow to her abdomen

Abu Jahl, in addition to physically torturing Sumaiyyah, also tortured her :psychologically at a time when she was old and frail. He used to taunt her saying

You have brought faith upon Muhammad not because of God, but because you are“ ”.enamoured with Muhammad and captivated by his good looks

Yasir’s son, A'bdullah, was also subjected to great tortures but he too remained steadfast. The other son, A'mmar, would be taken to the scorching desert, stripped under the hot sun and have an iron coat-of-mail placed over his half-burnt body. He would then be forced to lie on the heated sand, the particles of which were like tiny smouldering pieces of iron from the blacksmith’s furnace. As a result, the chains of the coat-of-mail would penetrate into A’mmar’s body and he would be told,“Reject Muhammad (s.a.w.) and worshipLat and U’zza,”but A'mmar never succumbed to their .torture

The burning metal left such traces imprinted upon his body that when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) saw him, A’mmar appeared to resemble someone who was afflicted with leprosy. The disease-like marks upon the face, arms and body of A’mmar gave .him the appearance of a leper

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to say to this family

!O’ Family of Yasir“

(Be patient and remain steadfast, for undoubtedly Paradise is your abode."(۱)

You are not Inferior to an Ant (۲

Amir Taimur Gurgaan, was someone who was so firm and unfaltering in every predicament, that he did not cower from any misfortune. When the reason for this :was sought from him, he said

Once, having fled from my enemies and seeking refuge in the ruins of a worn down" and dilapidated building, I was reflecting over my future when my eyes suddenly fell upon a small and weak ant, carrying a grain bigger than itself, endeavouring to climb .to the top of a wall

Looking carefully and counting accurately, I found that the grain had dropped from" its clutches sixty seven times before the ant finally managed to make it to the top of the wall with it. The spectacle of this effort on the part of the ant infused within me .strength of such great magnitude that I am never able to forget it

I said to myself: O' Taimur! You are by no means inferior to an ant. Arise and get back " to work.I got up and gathered my resolve till I eventually came to acquire the courage (that I now possess."(۲)

(.Hadhrat Nuh (a.s (۳

Hadhrat Nuh (a.s.) lived a very long and difficult life which resulted from his spending a lot of time among stout idol worshippers, attempting to rid them of their false beliefs. However, in spite of this, he persevered and exhibited steadfastness, withstanding .their tortures and troubles

At times, the people would beat him up to such an

۱- .Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۵; Tafsir al-Manaar, vol. ۲, pg. ۳۶۷

۲- .Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۷۴; Akhlaaq-e-Ijtimaae'e, pg. ۴۱

extent that for three whole days he would be in a state of unconsciousness while blood continued to ooze out of his ears. They would pick him up and throw him in a :house but upon regaining consciousness, he would pray

"!O' Lord! Guide my people for they comprehend not"

For approximately nine hundred and fifty years, he invited people towards God, but the people only increased in their rebellion and obstinacy. They would bring their :children towards Nuh (a.s.), point him out to them and say

O' Children! If you happen to remain alive after us, beware that you do not follow this" "!insane person

Then, they would say to him,"O' Nuh! If you do not stop your speeches, you shall be stoned to death. These people who follow you, are base and ignoble ones, who have listened to your talks and accepted your invitation without the slightest of reflection ".and deliberation

When Nuh (a.s.) spoke to them, they would insert their fingers into their ears and pull their clothes over their heads so that they would neither hear his words nor see his face. The situation reached such an unbearable point that Nuh (a.s.) saw no :alternative but to seek God's help and so he supplicated

(O' Allah! I am overpowered. Assist me and grant me relief from them."(۱"

Sakkaki (۴

.Siraj al-Deen Sakkaki was an Islamic scholar and a native of Kharazm

Sakkaki was a blacksmith by profession. Once, having constructed a tiny and delicate iron chest with great

p: ۳۱

.Taareekh-e-Anbiya, pg. ۴۸-۵۲ -۱

effort and trouble, he decided to present it to the king of the time. The king and his ministers appreciated the delicate piece of work but while Sakkaki stood by awaiting his reward, a scholar entered the courtroom, whereupon everybody honoured him and sat before him in veneration and respect. Sakkaki was very impressed and .askedwho he was. He was informed that he was one of the scholars of that period

Sakkaki lamented the nature of his own profession and decided to seek knowledge instead. He was thirty years of age when he approached a school and expressed his :desire to gain knowledge. The teacher of the school said to him

At your age, I doubt if you can make any progress. Go away and do not waste your" ".timeunnecessarily

But after a great deal of insistence, Sakkaki procured the permission to engage himself in seeking knowledge. His memory was very weak. Once, his teacher asked him to memorize the following religious ruling: The skin of a dog becomes pure by means of tanning; but the next day, when he had to recite it before his teacher, he :said

".The dog said: The skin of the teacher becomes pure by means of tanning"

.Hearing this, the students as well as the teacher burst out laughing and ridiculed him

Ten years of effort did not yield any result for Sakkaki, who became sad and despondent. He turned towards the mountains but as he wandered, he reached a place where drops

of water were falling from a height onto a large slab of stone. The persistent falling of water had carved a hole in the stone.

Sakkaki studied the stone for some time and then said to himself:

"Surely your heart is not as hard as this rock. If you persevere, you shall finally succeed." Having resolved on this, he returned to his school and from the age of ۴۰, began his studies with even greater diligence, vigour and patience. Sakkaki finally reached a stage whereby, in the field of Arabic grammar and literature, the scholars of his period looked upon him with wonder and awe.

He wrote the book Miftaah al-U'loom, which comprises twelve sciences of Arabic literature and is regarded as one of the greatest and most distinguished works on the subject.(۱)

۵. Reconciliation

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ اِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اِقْتَتَلُوْا فَأَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَهُما

(And if two parties of the believers fall into a quarrel, restore peace between them two)(۲)

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said:

لَأَنْ اَصْلَحَ بَيْنَ اِثْنَيْنِ اَحَبُّ اِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ اَتَصَدَّقَ بِدِيْنارَيْن

(Reconciling between two (disputing) persons is dearer to me than giving two dinars in charity.)(۳)

Short Explanation

One of the mandatory acts required of us is the inspection and rectification of our souls. Until a person reforms himself, he would be unable to bring about reformation

within others. Attempting or achieving reconciliation between the brethren-in-faith, .relatives, or neighbours, is an attribute which is immensely loved by God

For the purpose of establishing unity and harmony instead of disunity and discord, it

p: ۳۳

.Dastaan-ha-e-Maa, vol. ۳, pg. ۴۵ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat, (۴۹), vs. ۹ -۲

.Al-Kafi, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۶۷ -۳

is essential to make every possible effort to bring about reconciliation. In fact, in certain circumstances, it becomes permissible to resort to white lies. At times, it may .even become obligatory, so that dissension dies down and discord subsides

The Order to Reconcile (١

Once, during the time of Imam Sadiq (a.s.), Abu Hanifah, the administrator of Hajjaaj, had a quarrel with his son-in-law over some inheritance. Mufadhdhal Ibn U'mar Kufi (one of the close companions of Imam Sadiq (a.s.)) happened to pass by at the time. :When he overheard the dispute, he stopped and said to both the men

".Come with me to my house"

They did as requested. Upon reaching the house, he entered inside only to come out shortly afterwards with a bag containing four hundred dirhams, which he gave to both :men and made peace between them. He then explained

This is not my money but Imam Sadiq's (a.s.). He hadinstructed me: Whenever you" happen to see two of our Shiites disputing over money, give them this and make (peace between them."(١

Exercise Caution in Reconciliation (٢

:A'bd al-Malik says

There arose a dispute between Imam Baqir (a.s.) and some of the children of Imam Hasan (a.s.). I approached the Imam (a.s.) and sought to intervene in the matter in :order to reconcile them, but the Imam (a.s.) advised

Do not say a word in this dispute for our problem is like that of the old man from Bani" Israel, who had two daughters. One of them was married to a farmer, while the other .to a pottery-maker

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.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ٢, pg. ٢۴٩ -١

Once he decided to pay them a visit. He first visited the daughter who was the wife of the farmer and reaching her house, he inquired about her health. The daughter said: "Dear father, my husband has cultivated a large area of land and if it were to rain, we would be the most prosperous of the entire Bani Israel."

Then, proceeding towards the house of the other daughter, whose husband was a potter, he inquired about her health.

The daughter said, "Dear father, my husband has moulded pots in great quantity and if God were to withhold the rains till his pots dry up, we would be better off than the entire Bani Israel."

As he departed from the house of his second daughter, he prayed:

"O' God! Act as You deem fit for, in this situation, I cannot pray for either of them."

The Imam then said to me, "You too cannot intervene in this matter. Be wary, lest you show disrespect to either of us. Your responsibility towards us, because of our relationship with the Holy Prophet, is to treat all of us with deference and esteem."(۱)۴۹

۳) Reward of Reconciliation

Fudhail Ibn A'yyadh says:

A distressed man once took some rope, which his wife had woven, to the market in order to sell it so as to save himself and his family from hunger. Having sold it for one dirham, he intended to purchase some bread when he came across two persons quarrelling and trading blows with one another over

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۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۳۴; Raudhah al-Kafi, pg. ۸۵.

one dirham. The man stepped forward, gave them a dirham and established peace between them. Empty-handed once again, he went home and narrated the entire incident to his wife. She expressed happiness over his conduct. On searching the house, she found an old dress, which she handed to her husband, so that he could sell .it and procure some food

The man brought the dress to the market but there was nobody willing to buy it from .him. Looking around, he saw a person with a putrefied fish in his hand

He approached the man and said, "Let us exchange our goods. You give me your fish ".and I shall hand you my dress

.The fish-seller agreed and the man returned home with the fish

His wife busied herself with cleaning the fish when, suddenly, something valuable popped out of its stomach. She handed the object to her husband to sell in the market. The man sold it for a very good sum and returned home, but he had hardly entered the house when a destitute person came up to the door and called out, "Provide me ".from that which God has granted to you

As soon as the man heard the cry, he brought out all the money and invited the poor man to take as much as he wanted. The beggar picked up some money and started to :walk away. But he had just gone a few paces, when he returned and said

.I am not a poor person"

p: ۳۶

I have been sent by God and have to inform you that the amount of money which has (reached you, is your reward for reconciling those two quarrelling persons."(۱)

Mirza Jawad Agha Maliki (۴

Regarding the mystic, Mirza Jawad Agha Maliki (died ۱۳۴۳ A.H.), it has been recorded that during the initial stages of his journey in quest of spiritual purification and after having studied under his teacher, the great mystic Mulla Husainquli Hamadani (died :۱۳۱۱ A.H.) for two years, he complained to the teacher

"!In my quest for spiritual purification, I have not been able to achieve anything as yet"

.What is your name?" asked the teacher"

".He replied, "Don't you recognize me? I am Jawad Maliki Tabrizi

"?Husainquli Hamadani enquired, "Are you related to such and such Maliki family

.Mirza Jawad replied in the affirmative, and then went on to speak critically of them

Whenever the time comes for you to place their shoes before them to wear (which" you regard as base and lowly), I shall personally come to guide you," advised .Husainquli Hamadani

The next day when Mirza Jawad went for his classes, he seated himself behind all the other students and from that day on, slowly and steadily, he began to become acquainted and friendly with the students of the Maliki family living in Najaf. This continued until a stage was reached when he would even place their shoes before them to wear. When the relatives living in Tabriz came to know of this, the dissension and discord that existed among the members

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۱۸; Farajun Ba'd al-Shiddah -۱

.of the family, subsided and peace was established amongst them

:Later Mirza Jawad approached his teacher, who said to him

There are no new instructions for you (after that of reconciling the members of the" Malikifamily). Continue to act upon this order of the Sharia'h and derive benefits from ".it

Author's note: Incidentally, the book Miftaah al-Falaah of the late Sheikh Bahaai is an (excellent book to actupon."(۱)

Slowly, Mirza progressed in his quest. He came to the Hawza of Qum where he embarked upon training and guiding students in the field of spiritual purification. A great number of people, the common public as well as the educated elite, benefited .from him and his teachings

Advice of Mamun's Minister (۵

Once, Mamun the Abbasid Caliph, became furious with Ali Ibn Jahm Saami, the court :poet, and in a fit of anger ordered his servants

".Put him to death and confiscate all his possessions"

Mamun's minister, Ahmad Ibn Abi Duwaad, in a reconciliatory move, approached him ".and asked, "If you kill him, from whom shall we confiscate his wealth

.From his heirs," replied Mamun"

Ahmad said, "In such an event, the Caliph would not have confiscated his wealth but that of his heirs, for after his death he shall cease to be the owner of his possessions. And seizing the wealth of one for punishing another is an act of injustice, which does "!not befit the rank ofCaliphate

Mamun said, "Well, if this is the case, imprison him, confiscate his wealth and then put ".him to death

Ahmad departed, imprisoned Ali Ibn Jahm

Taareekh-e-Hukamaa Wa U'rafaa, pg. ۱۳۳ -۱

and held him alive till Mamun's anger had subsided. Mamun pardoned Ali Ibn Jahm (and commended the minister for his conduct and elevated him in rank and status.(١

Hopes .۶

point

Allah, the Wise, has said

ذَرْهُمْ يَاكُلُوْا وَ يَتَمَتَّعُوْا وَ يُلْهِهُمُ الْاَمَلُ

Leave them that they may eat and enjoy themselves and (that) hope may beguile) (them, for they will soon know.)(٢

:Imam Ali (a.s.) said

الآمَالُ لَا تَنْتَهِى

(Hopes never come to an end)(٣)

Short Explanation

People who are not content with what they possess of this world and crave for things which they do not possess, will keep chasing high hopes and lofty aspirations. A person, who imagines that he will always remain young, becomes heedless of death .and goes after huge ambitions

The majority of the inmates of hell would have gone there as a result of their procrastination. Instead of contending themselves with what they possessed, they kept deferring the rectification of their souls and the repayment of their debts for .later, and postponing their acts of worship for their old age

Indeed, a person must lower his hopes and aspirations, perform every act at its appropriate time and occasion, and refrain from trusting the 'tomorrow', something (that is entirely unknown and uncertain.(۴

Prophet Isa and the Farmer (١

It is reported that once, Prophet Isa Ibn Maryam (a.s.) had been sitting and intently .observing a farmer who, with a spade in hand, was hard at work in his field

:At that moment Prophet Isa prayed to God

".O' Lord! Take away from him his hopes and aspirations"

Suddenly, the person flung

p: ٣٩

.Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ٩٨ -١

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hijr (١٥), vs. ٣ -٢

.Ghurar al-Hikam, pg. ۶٢٩ -٣

.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ١۶٧ -۴

.his spade aside and sat down in a corner

.O' Lord! Return his hopes and aspirations back to him" Isa (a.s.) prayed once again"

.The man moved from his place, picked up the spade and began working again

"?Isa (a.s.) approached him and asked, "Why did you behave in such a way

The farmer answered, "I said to myself: 'You are an old man whose life has almost come to an end; how much more do you wish to work and exert yourself?' And so I flung the spade aside and sat down in the corner. But after a while, I said to myself: 'Why don't you work? You are still alive and in need of livelihood' and so, picking up (the spade, I returned to my work."(١

Hajjaaj and the Milk Seller (٢

Once, Hajjaaj Ibn Yusuf Thaqafi, the brutal tyrant, (and the minister of the Abbasid caliph, A'bd al-Malik Ibn Marwaan) was sauntering in the market when he witnessed a :milk-seller talking to himself. Whilst standing in a corner, Hajjaaj overheard him say

If I sell this milk, I shall earn a good income. I shall save the profit from this and" future sales till I have sufficient money to buy a goat. I shall then purchase an ewe and utilize its milk to increase my capital and within a few years, I shall become a .wealthy person, possessing several goats, cows and (other) assets

I shall then seek the hand of Hajjaaj's daughter in marriage, after which, I shall come" to acquire great importance

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ١, pg. ٢٩٨; Majmua'-e-Warraam -١

and significance. And if, on any occasion, Hajjaaj's daughter were to exhibit ".disobedience, I should kick her so hard that her ribs would break

As he said this, he kicked out with his leg, which unfortunately struck his milk container, spilling its entire contents in the process. Hajjaaj came forward and ordered two of his soldiers to force the milk-seller onto the ground and strike him a .hundred lashes

"?The milk-seller wailed, "But for what crime are you punishing me

Hajjaaj replied, "Did you not say that if you married my daughter, you would kick her so hard that her ribs would break? Now, as a punishment for that kick, you must taste (a hundred lashes."(۱

Desire for Martyrdom (۳

A'mr Ibn Jamuh, an inhabitant of Madinah and from the tribe of Khazraj, was a generous and magnanimous person. The first time the people of Khazraj arrived in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), he sought to know who the leader of their tribe was. They informed him that he was a person by the name of Jadd Ibn Qais, a :miser by nature. The Prophet (s.a.w.) said

".Your chief should be A'mr Ibn Jamuh, the white-complexioned, curly haired person"

A'mr was lame in one foot and as per Islamic laws, exempted from jihad. He had four sons and when the time for the battle of Uhud came, all of them prepared themselves .to fight

.I must come too and attain martyrdom," said Amr eagerly"

However, his sons stopped him and said, "Father, we are going

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.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۳, pg. ۱۵۰ -۱

".for battle. You stay in the house for it is not obligatory for you to fight

The old man refused to budge and insisted on participating in the battle. The sons gathered their relatives in an effort to get him to change his mind, but to no avail.

Amr approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and complained to him, "I yearn to attain martyrdom. Why do my children prevent me from going for jihad and getting martyred in the way of Allah?"

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said to the sons:

"This man seeks martyrdom and although it is not obligatory for him to fight, it is not forbidden for him to do so."

Overjoyed, Amr armed himself and set off for battle. During the battle, his sons kept an eye on him as he valiantly thrust himself into the heart of the enemy ranks, fighting heroically, till he was eventually martyred.

Before leaving for the battlefield, he had prayed: O' God! Grant me martyrdom and do not return me to my house. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) stated that his prayer had been answered.Amr was finally laid to rest in the cemetery of the martyrs of the battle of Uhud.(۱)۵۸

۴) Jo'dah State of Disgrace and Humiliation

Imam Hasan (a.s.) was extremely good-looking, possessed great forbearance and generosity, and was very kind and affectionate towards the members of his family. After the martyrdom of Imam Ali (a.s.), Mua'wiyah, for a period of ten years, embarked upon a mission of hatred, deception and enmity with respect to Imam Hasan (a.s.).

۱- Daastaan-ha-e-Ustaad, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۸.

He subjected the Imam (a.s.) to harm and injury on several occasions, but did not achieve anything. He therefore resolved to use the Imam’s wife Jo’dah, the daughter .of Asha’th Ibn Qais, to poison him

Mua'wiyah lured her by promising her that if she poisoned Hasan Ibn Ali, he would give her a hundred thousand dirhams and, in addition, he would marry her to his son Yazid. In the hope of acquiring wealth and with the aspiration of becoming the wife of Yazid, she agreed to comply with his request. Mua'wiyah handed her the poison that .he had acquired from the Roman Emperor

On a very hot day, Imam Hasan (a.s.) had observed a fast. At the time of Iftaar, the Imam (a.s.) was extremely thirsty. Jo’dah brought him a drink of milk in which she had .mixed the poison

As soon as Imam drank the milk, he experienced the effect of the poison. He realized what had happened and cried out aloud: Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raajiu’n. After praising God that he would now be moving from the ephemeral world towards the :eternal world, he turned towards Jo’dah and said to her

O’ Enemy of God! You have killed me, may God kill you! By God, you shall not come to“ acquire the slightest of that which you hope and aspire for. That person has deceived ”!you. May Allah humiliate you and him by means of His chastisement

The forbearance of Imam Hasan (a.s.) can be gauged from

the fact that when Imam Husain (a.s.) sought to know the identity of his murderer, Imam Hassan (a.s.) refused to divulge Jo'dah's name.

According to one tradition, for two days (and according to another, for forty days), the Imam suffered from the ill effects of the poison, till eventually, on the ۲۸th of Safar ۵۰ A.H., he bid farewell to this material world at the age of ۴۸ years.

As for Jo'dah, she carried her hopes and desires to her grave for Mua'wiyah reasoned that if she could not be faithful to Hasan Ibn Ali (a.s.), how could she be expected to be faithful to Yazid; and so he refused to fulfil any of his promises. As such, she died in a state of disgrace and humiliation.(۱)

۵) Mughirah Becomes Governor of Kufah

Mughirah Ibn Sho'bah, who was originally an inhabitant of Taaif and had embraced Islam in the ۵th century A.H., was a deceitful, devilish and power-loving person.

When he heard that Mua'wiyah had arranged for Ziyaad Ibn Abihi to settle in Kufah so that he could later take the governorship of Kufah away from him (Mughirah), he quickly appointed a deputy in Kufah and set off towards Shaam to meet Mua'wiyah. He expressed his wish to be transferred from Kufah, explaining to Mua'wiyah:

"As I have grown old now, I have to request you to place a few small villages of Qirqisiya under my control, so that I can rest myself."

Mua'wiyah realised that one of his opponents, by the name of Qais, lived in Qirqisiya and if

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۱- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۳۱.

.Mughirah were to go there, he might form an alliance with him against Mua'wiyah

.We are in need of you and you must remain in Kufah," said Mua'wiyah"

Mughirah declined the offer, but Mua'wiyah's insistence persuaded him to give in. It was midnight when Mughirah returned to Kufah. He immediately ordered his .associates to dispatch Ziyaad Ibn Abihi towards Shaam

After a period, Mua'wiyah appointed Sa'eed Ibn A'as as the governor of Kufah in place :of Mughira, who incited Yazid (son of Mua'wiyah) by telling him

Why is Mua'wiyah not thinking about you? It is imperative that he nominates you as" "!his successor and the crown prince

Yazid found the idea so appealing that he presented it to his father, Mua'wiyah. With .Mughira's support, Yazid was eventually proclaimed successor to Mua'wiyah

In the meantime, Mua'wiyah appointed A'mr A'as as the governor of Misr, while .placing Kufah under his son, A'bdullah Ibn A'mr A'as

When Mughirah came to know of this, he warned Mua'wiyah, "By this act, have you "?not placed yourself between the mouths of two lions

Having grasped the message of this statement, Mua'wiyah deposed A'bdullah from .Kufah and once again placed Mughirah at the helm of affairs in Kufah

Thus, by means of two cunning plots (Yazid's succession to the caliphate, and the scheme of 'between the mouths of two lions'), Mughirah became the governor of Kufah. After ruling for seven years and a few months, he died of plague at the age of forty-nine.(۱)۶۰

Trustworthiness .۷

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

اِنَّ اللّهَ یاَمُرُکُمْ اَنْ

p: ۴۵

.Paighambar Wa Yaraan, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۷۲-۲۷۵ -۱

تُؤَدُّوا الْاَمانَاتِ اَلیَ اَهْلِهَا

(Surely Allah commands you to render back your trusts to their owners.(۱)

:Imam Baqir (a.s.) said

فَلَوْ اَنَّ قاتِلَ عَلِیّ بْنِ اَبِی طالِب ائْتَمَنَی عَلیَ اَمانَهٍ لَاَدَّیْتُها اِلَیْهِ

If the murderer of Imam Ali (a.s.) places a trust in my possession, I would surely) return it back to him)(۲)۶۲

Short Explanation

If anything is placed in trust with someone, safeguarding of that thing is obligatory and unfaithfulness with respect to it is prohibited, irrespective of whether its owner is .a believer or a disbeliever

A trustworthy person, as a result of safeguarding people's belongings, becomes the .beneficiary of God's grace and favour

A person who is unfaithful towards people's trust can be compared to a thief and God .cloaks such a person with poverty and indigence

.One of the signs of perfect faith is not being unfaithful towards the trusts

A trust can be in the form of money, things or even secrets. Shaitan leads astray a trustworthy person by causing him to become unfaithful towards the trust placed with .him

Trustworthiness of Umm Salamah (۱

When Imam Ali (a.s.) decided to move to Iraq and settle there, he handed his letters and testament to Umm Salamah, who in turn passed them over to Imam Hasan (a.s.) .on his return to Madinah

In a similar manner, when Imam Husain (a.s.) set out for Iraq, he too placed his letters and testament in the custody of Umm Salamah with instructions that she should hand

them over to his eldest son whenever he sought them from her. After the martyrdom of Imam

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.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Nisaa (۴), vs. ۵۸ -۱

Al-Kafi, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۳۳ -۲

Husain (a.s.), Imam Sajjad (a.s.) returned to Madinah and she handed documents over to him.(۱)۶۳

:U'mar, the son of Umm Salamah, narrates

My mother said: Once, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), accompanied by Ali (a.s.), came to" my house and asked for a sheepskin. After I had handed it to him, he wrote something on the sheepskin and returned it to me with the instruction: "Whoever seeks this trust ".from you after mentioning these signs, hand it over to him

As time passed, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) departed from this world. Time passed and .Imam Ali (a.s.) became Caliph and still nobody came to claim this trust

:U'mar continues

On the day when the people pledged allegiance to Ali (a.s.), I was seated among" them. As he stepped down from the pulpit, the Imam's eyes fell on me whereupon he .said: Seek permission from your mother for I wish to meet her

I hurried to my mother and as soon as I informed her of Imam's (a.s.) request, she ".announced that she had been waiting for that day

The Imam (a.s.) entered and asked Umm Salamah to hand him the trust which contained certain signs.My mother got up and took out a small chest from inside a larger one and handed it to him. Then, she turned to me and advised: "Do not forsake Ali (a.s.), for none other than him is the rightful Imam after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)."

(۲)۶۴

The Unfaithful Grocer (۲

During the rule of A'zud al-Daulah Dailami, a stranger once came to Baghdad wishing to sell

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۱- Safinah al-Bihaar, under 'سلم'

.Payghambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۷۵; Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۶, pg. ۹۴۲ -۲

a necklace worth a thousand dinars, but could not find any purchaser for it. As he intended to travel to Makkah, he began to search for a trustworthy person who would .safeguard his necklace

The people pointed him to a grocer who was known for his piety. The stranger placed .the necklace in the grocer's trust and proceeded towards Makkah

When he returned from Makkah, he approached the grocer and presented him with some gifts that he had brought with him. To the stranger's great surprise, the grocer pretended as if he did not know him and denied having possession of anything belonging to him. A quarrel ensued, as a result of which, people gathered and threw .the person out of the 'pious' grocer's shop

The person approached the grocer for his necklace several times, only to receive .abuse and invectives

Someone advised him to complain to King A'zud al-Daulah Dailami.Heeding the :advice, the man wrote a letter to the king, who replied

For three days, wait by the door of the grocery. On the fourth day, I shall pass there" and when I greet you, reply to my greetings. The following day, seek your necklace ".from thegrocer and then inform me of the outcome

The person did as instructed. On the fourth day, the king, with great pomp and grandeur, passed by the grocery and as soon as his eyes fell upon the person from Baghdad, he greeted him. The person returned the greeting. The king, exhibiting great

:respect and esteem, began to complain

You have come from Baghdad but you did not deem it fit to honour me with a visit“ ”.and to grant me an opportunity to provide you with accommodation and comfort

.The stranger apologized for not having informed the king of his arrival

All the while, the grocer and the people around him, looked on in amazement, wondering who this person was who was revered so greatly by the king. The grocer .began to fear for his life

As soon as the king’s procession had passed, the grocer turned towards the stranger :and said

Brother, when exactly did you place that necklace with me? Did it have any marks?“ Let me have another look, perhaps I might just be able to locate it.” The person .described his necklace and the grocer, after a short search, found it

He handed it over to the person and said:“God is aware of the fact that it had simply ”.slipped out of my mind

Arriving before the king, the person related the entire episode to him. The king ordered the grocer to be arrested, placed the necklace around his neck and sent him to the gallows. He then ordered the following announcement to be made all over the :city

Such is the punishment for anyone who takes possession of a trust and then denies“ ”!it. O’ People! Do take heed from this incident

The king then returned the necklace to the stranger from Baghdad and sent him to his own city.(۱)۶۵

Remaining Faithful when Someone Trusts you (۳

A'bdullah Ibn Sinaan

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ١, pg. ٢٠٢; Mustatraf, vol. ١, pg. ١١٨ -١

:says

I approached Imam Sadiq (a.s.) in the mosque at a time when he had completed his“ :A’sr prayers and was sitting down facing the Qiblah. I asked him

Some of the governors and rulers consider us to be trustworthy and thus place their“ wealth with us, but at the same time, they do not pay their ‘khums’. Do we return their ”?money to them or do we keep it for our use

The Imam (a.s.) replied three times,“By the Lord of the Ka’bah! Even if Ibn Muljam, the murderer of my father Ali (a.s.), were to place something in trust with me, I would (return it to him whenever he wanted it back.”(۱

The Shepherd and the Jews’ Sheep (۴

In the year ۷ A.H., the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) with an army of one thousand and six hundred soldiers, set out to conquer the fort of Khaibar, which was about ۹۶ miles from Madinah. The Muslim soldiers had stationed themselves in the desert around Khaibar for sometime but the conquest of the fort remained elusive. During this period, they found themselves in a very difficult situation as far as food was concerned. The lack of food and intense hunger forced them to eat animals like .horses and mules, whose meat is disapproved by Islam

In these circumstances, a black shepherd, who used to graze the sheep of the Jews, arrived in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). He embraced Islam and then said :to the Holy Prophet

These sheep belong to the Jews and I hereby hand“

.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۵۴; Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۱۵, pg. ۱۴۹ -۱

".them over to you

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) replied unequivocally

These goats have been placed in your possession as a trust and in our religion it is" forbidden to be unfaithful to one's trust. It is incumbent upon you to lead the sheep to ".the door of the fort and hand them over to their owners

The shepherd, in compliance with his orders, handed the sheep over to their respective owners and then returned to join the Muslim army.(١)

Possessions Entrusted to the Holy Prophet (۵

When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) migrated from Makkah to Madinah, he left behind Amirul Mu'mineen in Makkah so that he could return the possessions entrusted to the .Prophet, back to their respective owners

:Handhalah Ibn Abi Sufiyaan instructed U'mair Ibn Waail to go to Ali and tell him

I had placed one hundred mithqaal(٢) of gold with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Since he" has fled to Madinah and you are his representative here, please handmy property back to me." Handhalah added that if Ali asked for witnesses to support the claim, all .the Quraish would testify to the veracity of U'mair's claim

Initially, U'mair was hesitant but Handhalah enticed him by presenting him with some .gold and a necklace belonging to Hind, the wife of Abu Sufiyaan

U'mair approached Ali (a.s.) and made the claim, adding thatAbu Jahl, I'krimah, .U'qbah, Abu Sufiyaan and Handhalah would testify for him

The Imam (a.s.) retorted, "May their deception rebound on themselves", and then ,asked him to bring his witnesses near the Ka'bah. When all of them had arrived

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ٨, pg. ١١۴; Seerah Ibn Hishaam, vol. ٣, pg. ٣۴۴ -١

٢- A weight, equivalent to ٥ grams.

he began questioning each one, individually and separately, about the items being held in trust.

"What time was it when you had placed your possession with Muhammad (s.a.w.)?" he questioned U'mair first.

"It was morning when I gave him the gold and he handed it over to his servant," replied U'mair.

H. Ali (a.s.) asked Abu Jahl the same question.

He replied, "I have no idea."

When Abu Sufiyaan was questioned, he responded, "It was at sunset and he had placed it in his sleeves."

When Handhalah was questioned, he gave the answer, "He took possession of the gold at the time of Dhuhr and placed it in front of him."

When U'qbah was questioned, he replied, "It was A'sr when the Prophet took the possession in his own hands and carried it to his house."

And finally, when the Imam (a.s.) questioned I'krimah, he answered, "It was bright and early in the morning when Muhammad (s.a.w.) took possession of it and sent it to the house of Fatimah (a.s.)."

The Imam (a.s.) then informed them of their conflicting statements and their deception thus became apparent.

Then, turning to U'mair, he asked him, "Why was it that while you lied, you appeared uneasy and your face had gone pale?"

U'mair replied, "By the Lord of the Ka'bah! I had not placed anything in trust with Muhammad (s.a.w.). It was a deception Handhalah had bribed me into. This necklace here, belonging to Hind, with her name inscribed on it, is one of the things presented to me as a bribe."[1]

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۱ - Rahnamaa-e-Sa'adat, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۳۵; Naasikh al-Tawaareekh - Amirul Mu'mineen, pg. ۶۷۶.

Examination .٨

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

الَّذِی خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَ الْحیاهَ لِیَبْلوَکُم اَیُّکُم اَحْسَنُ عَمَلاً

Who created death and life that He may try you (to prove) which of you is best in) (deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving)(١)

:Imam Sajjad (a.s.) said

اِنَّما خَلَقَ الدُّنْیاَ وَ اَهْلَها لِیَبْلُوَهُم فِیهَا

(Allah created the world and its inhabitants in order to examine them in it.)(٢)

Short Explanation

Man faces different types of examination in the world. He is tested through fear, hunger, diseases, death of one's near and dear ones, financial constraints, false accusations, evil neighbours, and so on

Since this world is a place of deeds and examinations, blessed and happy are those .who do not fail at any stage of life

On one occasion, a person is tested by means of wealth and on another occasion by indigence. He achieves success by resorting to thanksgiving during affluence and patience during poverty. Everyone, without exception, is subjected to trials and examinations which vary only in their 'quality' and 'quantity'. Do you not see how some people, who are accustomed to boasting, lose their patience and fail miserably ?in the face of examinations

Haroon Makki (١

:Sahl Khorasani approached Imam Sadiq (a.s.) and complained

Why is it that in spite of the truth being on your side, you do not stage an uprising? At"

the present time, there are one hundred thousand of your Shiites, who upon your orders, would immediately unsheathe their swords for battle."

The Imam (a.s.), with the intention of giving him a practical answer, ordered the furnace to

p: ۵۳

۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mulk (۶۷), vs. ۲.

۲- Al-Kafi, vol. ۸, pg. ۷۵, (New Edition).

.be lighted. He then instructed Sahl to jump into the flames

Sahl said, "O' My Master! May God shower you with His grace and favours! Do not place me in the fire. I take back my words and request you to withdraw your ".instruction too

Meanwhile, one of the sincere companions of the Imam (a.s.), by the name of Haroon Makki, happened to arrive. Just as he entered, the Imam (a.s.) told him to take off his shoes and walk into the hot furnace. As soon as Haroon heard the Imam's (a.s.) order, .he entered the furnace and sat within the flames

The Imam (a.s.) then turned to Sahl and started to brief him about the circumstances .prevailing in Khorasan, as if he had been there to witness the events taking place

".After a while, he said to Sahl, "Get up and have a look inside the furnace

When Sahl peered into the furnace, he saw Haroon sitting cross-legged and .unharmed inside, surrounded by the fiery flames

How many individuals like this one exist in Khorasan?" the Imam (a.s.) questioned" .Sahl

.By Allah! Not a single person like Haroon Makki exists in Khorasan," replied Sahl "

The Imam (a.s.) then explained, "I shall not stage an uprising when I do not have even five sincere companions. (And do remember) we are very well aware as to when we should stage an uprising."(۱)۷۲

!Buhlool Succeeds (۲

Haroon Al-Rashid, the Abbasid Caliph, wished to appoint a judge in Baghdad. After conferring with his courtiers, it was unanimously agreed

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.Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۴, pg. ۶۵; Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۲, pg. ۷۱۴ -۱

.that none, except Buhlool, possessed the right qualities for the post

Buhlool was summoned and the post was offered to him. But Haroon declined to accept, saying that he was neither worthy of the post nor capable of undertaking the .task

Haroon said, “All the inhabitants of Baghdad are of the opinion that none except you, ”!is worthy of the post and you deny it

:Buhlool explained

I am more aware of myself than any of you. Whatever I have stated is either true or“ false. If the reason I have given is true, then it would be improper of me to assume the office of judge when I am not capable. On the other hand, if I have lied to you, ”.then a liar does not deserve to take this post

But Haroon insisted that Buhlool took up the responsibility. Buhlool requested that he be granted one night to reflect over the offer. The next morning, Buhlool feigned insanity and placing a staff between his legs ran through the streets and markets of :Baghdad, screaming

”.Make room for my horse and keep away lest it kicks you“

As soon as the people noticed his antics, they commented that Buhlool had gone :insane. When Haroon Al-Rashid was informed of this, he said

Buhlool has not become insane; rather he has saved his religion and has escaped our“ clutches. He has enacted this in order to prevent himself from interfering in the affairs (and the rights of the people.”(۱

Author’s note: Yes, each one is subjected to

Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۸۱; Raudhaat al-Jannaat, pg. ۳۶; Gharaaib al-Akhbaar -۱ .of Sayyid Ne’matullah Jazaairi

a specific examination. Not only was Buhlool offered authority, but the Caliph would send him food. Buhlool, however, would not eat it, saying,: Throw it to the dogs behind the bath. Even they, if they were to realize that it was the Caliph's food would refuse !to eat it

!Abu Hurairah Failed (۳

Abu Hurairah embraced Islam in the year ۸ A.H. He was therefore in the company of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) for only two years. He died .in the year ۵۹ A.H., at the age of ۷۸

Abu Hurairah had come to be regarded as one of the companions of the holy Prophet. However, he failed to benefit from the Prophet's (s.a.w.) holy company and protect himself from blunders and errors. On the contrary, he misused his position and sold .himself for the material gains of this world

Abu Huairah used to forge traditions and ascribe them to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in return for riches. On the first of the occasions when this occurred, the second Caliph prohibited him from narrating traditions; on the second occasion, the Caliph punished .him by lashing him, and on the third occasion, he had him expelled from the city

When A'laa, the governor of Bahrain passed away in the year ۲۱ A.H., U'mar appointed Abu Hurairah as governor in his place. But within a short period, a large amount of money (four hundred thousand dinars) had found its way into Abu Hurairah's own pockets. As a

.result, U’mar dismissed him from his post

Mua'wiyah used to compel some of the companions and the ‘followers’ to forge traditions against Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) and one of the principal personalities in this .act was Abu Hurairah

Once Asbagh Ibn Nubata said to Abu Hurairah, “Contrary to the teachings of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) you befriend Ali’s (a.s.) enemies and harbour enmity towards his ”!(peace be upon him) friends

Hearing this, Abu Hurairah sighed deeply and simply said, “Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi ”.raajiu’n

Another of the evil deeds committed by Abu Hurairah was that, in order to acquire riches from Mua'wiyah, he accompanied the latter to the mosque of Kufah and :slapping his forehead several times in full view of the gathering, said

O’ People of Iraq! Do you think I shall ascribe a lie to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and“ thereby burn myself in the fire of Hell? By Allah! I have heard theHoly Prophet (s.a.w.) say: ‘For every prophet there is aholy sanctuary and mine is in Madinah, between the mountains of E’er and Thaur. Whoever establishes an innovation in my sanctuary, may the curse of Allah, the angels and all the people be upon him’. I take Allah as my witness that Ali (a.s.) introduced an innovation within the sanctuary of the Holy .(Prophet (s.a.w.).” (God Forbid

Mua'wiyah was so pleased with this statement that he rewarded Abu Hurairah and made him the ruler of Madinah.(۱)۷۴

Ibrahim and the Sacrifice of Ismai’l (۴

God ordered Ibrahim (a.s.) to sacrifice his son Ismai’l (a.s.). He did

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.Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۵۴-۱۶۶ -۱

this to examine Ibrahim's (a.s.) patience and obedience to Allah. If Ibrahim (a.s.) .passed this test, he would demonstrate his worthiness of Allah's grace and favour

Having been bestowed with a child after years of loneliness without any children, he was being ordered by God to sacrifice with his own hands the apple of his eyes, who .had grown up to become a young boy of ۱۳

:(.Ibrahim (a.s.) said to Ismai'l (a.s

O' My beloved son! I have dreamt that I am sacrificing you; what do you think about" "?this

Dear father! Act as you have been ordered and, God willing, you shall find me of the" .steadfast ones," Ismai'l (a.s.) replied

:Then, he strengthened his father's resolve by advising

Father, death is very painful and I am so fearful of it that its very thought leaves me" disturbed and distressed, so bind my hands and legs firmly, lest I beat about with them while my throat is being slit and thereby reduce the rewards ordained for me. In addition, sharpen the knife so that I am put at peacequickly. Also, place me with my face towards the ground and not upon my cheeks for I fear that if your eyes fall upon my face, compassion might overtake you and prevent you from complying with the Divine commandment. Take off your garments so that my blood does not taint them and my mother does not see my blood. If you deem it fit, take my clothes to my ;mother

".they might serve to console her and lessen her grief at my death

Hearing this speech, Ibrahim (a.s.) responded, "O' Son! You are indeed an excellent ".aide (to me) in executing God's commandment

Ibrahim (a.s.) took his son to Mina (the place of sacrifice), sharpened the knife and then binding Ismai'l's (a.s.) hands and legs, laid him with his face towards the ground. Ibrahim then raised his head towards the heavens and placed the knife on his son's throat. But, as he did so, he realized that the knife did not cut. Looking at it, he noticed that the sharp knife had turned blunt. This occurrence was repeated several times, :when suddenly a heavenly voice was heard saying

O' Ibrahim! Indeed, you have acted as you had dreamt and have complied with the .commandment given to you

As a substitute for the sacrifice of Ismai'l (a.s.), Jibraeel brought a goat, which Ibrahim (a.s.) subsequently sacrificed. From here, it became a custom that those performing the hajj every year should offer a sacrifice at Mina.(۱)۷۵

Sa'd and the Holy Prophet (۵

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), by the name of Sa'd, was very poor and was regarded as one of the People of the Ledge.(۲) He used to offer all his prayers behind the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), who was greatly distressed by Sa'd's poverty. One day, the Holy Prophet promised him that if he got some money, he would give it to Sa'd. Time passed but no money came to the

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Taareekh-e-Anbiya, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۶۴-۱۶۹ -۱

These were the people, who did not possess a house of their own and so, lived in -۲ .the veranda or the rooms of the mosque

Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) who became even more distressed at Sa'd's situation. It was at this time that Jibraeel descended from the .skies, bringing with him two dirhams

He said to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), "Allah has said: We are aware of your distress in connection with Sa'd's poverty. If you want him to emerge from this state, give him ".these two dirhams and ask him to engage himself in trade

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) took the two dirhams and set out of the house for the Dhuhr .prayers when he found Sa'd waiting for him near one of the rooms of the mosque

:Turning to him, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked

"?Can you engage yourself in business"

.By Allah! I have no capital with which I can do business," replied Sa'd"

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) handed him the two dirhams and told him to start trading .with this capital

Sa'd took the money and after offering the Dhuhr and A'sr prayers set about to earn .his livelihood

God blessed him in such a way that whatever he purchased for a dirham, he would sell it for double the amount. Consequently, his financial state gradually improved. This continued till he eventually purchased a shop near the mosque and began .conducting his business from there

As his business picked up, he began to become lax with respect to his acts of worship, even to the extent that when Bilal recited the adhaan he would not get ready for the ,prayers. Previously

he was ready well before adhaan was recited!

When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) noticed Sa’d’s lateness for prayers, he said to him:

“Sa'd, this world has made you so busy that it has even weaned you away from your prayers.”

Sa’d replied, “What can I do? If I leave my wealth unattended, it will go to waste and I will end up in loss. From one person, I have to collect the money for the goods sold, while from another I have to take possession of the goods purchased.”

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was disturbed at Sa'd’s involvement with his wealth and his negligence with respect to his acts of worship. At that moment, Jibraeel descended and said:

“Allah has said: ‘We possess knowledge of your distress. Which of the two states do you prefer for Sa'd?”

The Holy Prophet indicated that the previous state was beneficial for Sa’d.

Jibraeel agreed, “Yes, love for the world causes man to become heedless of the hereafter. Take back the two dirhams, which you had given to him previously.”

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) approached Sa'd and asked him if he could return the two dirhams that he had given to him.

“If you desire, I shall even give you two hundred dirhams,” said Sa’d.

“No, just give me the two dirhams, which you had taken from me.”

Sa’d handed the money to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and within a short time, his financial situation turned a full circle and before long he

(found himself in his previous state.(1

Enjoining The Good And Forbidding The Evil .9

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

كُنْتُم خَيْرَ اُمَّهٍ اُخْرِجَت للنَّاسِ تَاْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَ تَنْهَونَ عَنِ الْمُنكَر

You are the best group that has been brought forth for mankind: you enjoin)
(goodness and you forbid the evil.)(2

:Imam Ali (a.s.) said

مَنْ تَرَکَ اِنْکَارَ الْمُنْکَرِ بِقَلْبِهِ وَ يَدِهِ وَ لِسَانِهِ فَهُوَ مَيِّتٌ بَيْنَ الْاَحْياَء

One, who refrains from prohibiting the evil by means of his heart, hand and tongue, is
((like) a dead amongst the living.(3

Short Explanation

Anyone who seeks to enjoin the good and forbid the evil must himself be aware of .what is lawful and unlawful, and should not act contrary to what he preaches

His aim should be to guide the people. He should talk nicely and be aware of the difference in the level of understanding of the people. If he is opposed, he should .exhibit patience and if supported and favoured, he should thank God

Bishr Haafi (1

Once, Imam Kadhim (a.s.) was passing by the house of Bishr Haafi, when he heard the .sound of dance and music coming from inside

.At that very moment a slave-girl came out of the house to throw some garbage

.Is the owner of this house a free person or a slave?" the Imam (a.s.) asked her"

".The slave-girl replied, "He is a free man

Hearing this, the Imam (a.s.) remarked, “You speak the truth, for had he been a slave, ”.he would have feared his Master

When the slave-girl came back inside the house, Bishr, who had been consuming wine, asked her what took her so

p: ۶۲

.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۲, pg. ۷۸; Hayaat al-Quloob, vol. ۱, pg. ۵۷۸ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Aale I'mraan (۳), vs. ۱۱۰ -۲

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۳۵ -۳

long. As soon as the slave-girl related what had happened, Bishr immediately got up and ran bare-footed after the Imam (a.s.). Once he had caught up with the Imam, he expressed shame and repentance over his acts, sought forgiveness and amended his (wrongful ways.(١)

Mulla Hasan Yazdi, the Forbidder of Evil (٢

During the reign of Fath Ali Shah Qajaar, there lived in Yazd a scholar, by the name of Mulla Hasan Yazdi(٢) who was held in high esteem by the people. The governor of the city of Yazd used to oppress the people and treat them with great cruelty. Mulla Hasan advised him to stop his evil deeds. When he refused to mend his ways, Mulla .complained to Fath Ali Shah, but this too proved unproductive

Since Mulla was particularly assiduous with respect to the issue of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, he assembled the people of Yazd who, upon his orders, .collectively threw the governor out of the city

When Fath Ali Shah was informed of this incident, he was immensely upset and .ordered Mulla Hasan Yazdi to be brought before him in Tehran

.As soon as Mulla came, Fath Ali Shah asked him about the incident in Yazd

Mulla replied, "Your governor in Yazd was a tyrant and I wanted to relieve the people ".of his evils by throwing him out of Yazd

.The answer so enraged the Shah that he ordered Mulla's legs to be tied

Ameen-uddaulah said to the Shah, "He is not at fault. It was without his permission that the

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.(Darsi Az Akhlaaq, pg. ۱۲۸; Minhaaj al-Karaamah (of A'llamah Hilli -۱

.Author of Muheej Al-Ahzaan -۲

".people threw out the governor

:In spite of his feet being fettered, Mulla Hasan spoke out

Why do we need to lie? I had the governor thrown out of Yazd because of his"
".oppression

Eventually, due to the intervention of Ameen-uddaulah, Mulla Hasan's legs were
.untied

That night, Shah witnessed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in his dream and observed that
.two of his toes were tied

.Why are your toes tied?" he asked the Holy Prophet"

".The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) replied, "It is you who has tied them

.Shah pointed out that he had never shown such disrespect

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) explained, "But was it not you who had ordered Mulla Hasan
"?Yazdi's feet to be tied

Shah woke up from his sleep greatly alarmed. He ordered Mulla Hasan to be given resplendent clothes and to be returned to his city with great honour and respect. Mulla Hasan refused to accept the clothes and returned to Yazd. Later, he travelled to
(Kerbala and remained there for the rest of his life.(۱

God's Command to Destroy City (۳

God ordered two angels to destroy a city. On reaching there, the angels noticed one of the inhabitants beseeching and supplicating to God. One of the angels said to the
:other

"?Don't you see this person supplicating"

.Yes I do, but God's order has to be executed," replied the other one"

".Wait. Let me ask God as to what should be done"

Praying to God, the first angel inquired: "In this city there is a person, who entreats and beseeches you. Do we still impose thechastisement

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1- .Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۳, pg. ۱۴۶; Qisas al-U'lema, pg. ۱۰۱

"?upon the city

:The answer came from God

Execute the commandment which has been given to you, for that person has never" been perturbed and distressed for My sake, nor did he show anger over the evil deeds (committed by the other people."(1)

Yunus Ibn Abd al-Rahmaan (4

When Imam Kadhim (a.s.) departed from the world, his representatives had huge sums of wealth in their possession. As a result of their greed some of them began to deny the Imam's death and thereby laid the foundation of a sect known as Waaqifiyyah. Ziyaad Qandi possessed seventy thousand gold coins while Ali Ibn Abi .Hamzah had thirty thousand

Meanwhile, Yunus Ibn A'bd al-Rahmaan invited the people towards the Imamate of Imam Ridha (peace be upon him) and regarded the Waaqifiyah sect as false and erroneous. When Ziyaad Qandi and Ali Ibn Abi Hamzah realised what Yunus was :doing, they sent him a message asking

Why do you invite the people towards Imam Ridha (a.s.)? If your objective is to" ".acquire riches, we will make you rich

They pledged to give him ten thousand gold coins if he kept quiet and refrained from .(.inviting the people towards the Imam (a.s

Yunus Ibn A'bd al-Rahmaan(2) replied to them by quoting a narration from Imam :Baqir (a.s.) and Imam Sadiq (a.s.), which says

When innovations manifest themselves amongst the people, it is imperative for the' elders and leaders to manifest what they know (so that people refrain from evil) and if they fail to do so, God shall take away from them, the light

١- Jaame’ al-Sa’adaat, vol. ٢, pg. ٢٣١.

٢- Imam Ridha (peace be upon him) had said: Yunus Ibn A'bd al-Rahmaan, in his time, is as Salman Farsi was, in his own.

of faith.' Under no circumstances shall I abandon jihad in the path of religion and the affairs of God."

After receiving this forthright and explicit reply from Yunus, Ziyaad Qandi and Ali Ibn Abi Hamzah became his enemies.(١)

5) The Caliph on the Rooftop!

One night, the second Caliph was surveying the streets to ascertain the general state of affairs in the city. In the course of his inspection, he happened to pass by a house from which he heard suspicious noises. He climbed over the wall of the house and looked inside. A man and a woman were sitting together, with a jar of wine placed before them.

Addressing them harshly he said, "You commit sins in solitude in the belief that God shall not make manifest your secret?"

The person turned to the Caliph and said, "Do not be so hasty, for if I have committed one sin, you have committed three. Firstly, God has said in the Qur'an: and do not spy(٢). You have been doing just that. Secondly, He has said in the Qur'an: and go into the houses by their doors(٣). You have entered from over the wall. Thirdly, He has said: So when you enter houses, greet your people with a salutation(۴). You have not done so."

The Caliph asked, "If I were to pardon you, do you resolve to amend your ways?"

"By God! I shall never repeat this act again," the man replied.

The Caliph said, "Now you can be at ease, for I have

١- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ٢, pg. ٢۵٣.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat (۴٩), vs. ١٢ (وَ لَا تَجَسَّسُوا)

٣- Ibid, ch. Al-Baqarah (٢), vs. ١٨٩ (وَ آْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِن اَبوَابِهَا)

۴- Ibid, ch. Al-Nur (۲۴), vs. ۶۱ (إِذاَ دَخَلتُم بُيُوتاً فَسَلِّمُوا)

(pardoned you.”(١

Fairness .١٠

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِله شُهَداءَ بِالْقِسطِ

(Be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice.)(٢)

:Imam Ali (a.s.) has said

مَنْ يُنْصِفُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ لَمْ يَزِدهُ الله إلاَّ عِزًّا

(One, who exhibits fairness on his part, Allah shall increase him in glory.)(٣)

Short Explanation

A person’s faith does not become perfect until he observes fairness with respect to .himself and others. In exchange, God shall increase his honour and glory

Man, by nature, prefers his own self and loves everything that is associated with him. He also possesses a dislike for everything bad and evil. Thus, if he helps someone in need, he would be commended by one and all. Similarly, (justice demands that) if he does not desire anything bad and evil for himself, he should not desire it for the others .too

This also holds true when mediating between two warring parties; never should he side unfairly with one, against the other, even if the outcome results in his own .detriment

An Advice from the Holy Prophet (١

An Arab approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) when he was about to embark upon a .military expedition

Seizing the reins of the Prophet'scamel, he said, "O' Prophet of Allah! Inform me of a deed that would earn me Paradise."

"Conduct yourself with people in the same manner as you would want them to behave towards you and refrain from doing to them what you would not want them to do to you," advised the Prophet (s.a.w.) and then added, "Let go of the reins (for I have to go for

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۱- Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۹; Al-Ghadeer, vol. ۶, pg. ۱۲۱.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Maidah (۵), vs. ۸.

۳- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۶۸.

(jihad)."(1)

2) The Equity of Imam Ali

Shu'bi narrates:

Like the other youths, I entered the vast open ground of Kufah, where I witnessed Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) standing beside two containers which were filled with gold and silver coins. He had a small whip in his hand. A huge crowd had gathered around him and he kept them back by means of his whip, to prevent them from hampering the distribution of the money.

The Imam (a.s.) began distributing the money amongst the people until nothing remained for himself and he returned home empty-handed.

I returned home and said to my father, "I witnessed a very strange act today but I fail to comprehend if this person's action was good or bad because he never retained anything for himself!"

My father inquired, "Who was the person?"

"Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.)," I replied and then went on to narrate what had transpired earlier. Upon hearing Ali's (a.s.) fairness in distributing the money, my father began to weep and said to me, "My son, you have witnessed the most excellent person from amongst the people."(2)

3) A'di Ibn Haatim

A'di, the son of the well-known Haatim Taai, was one of the sincere and loyal companions of Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.). From the year 10 A.H. when he accepted Islam, A'di had always remained in the service of the Imam (a.s.), and had fought alongside him in the battles of Jamal, Siffeen and Nahrawaan. In the battle of Jamal he sustained an injury to one of his eyes as a result of which he lost his vision.

Once he

۱- Al-Kafi, vol. ۲, Chapter of Fairness, tr. ۱۰.

۲- Al-Ghaaraat, vol. ۱, pg. ۵۵; Dastaanhai Az Zindagi Ali, pg. ۷.

came to Mua'wiyah for some purpose. Mua'wiyah asked him why he had not brought .his sons with him

.They were killed while fighting alongside Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.)," he replied"

Ali has not been just to you, for he sent your sons to be killed while he has kept his" .own sons alive!" said Mua'wiyah

A'di retorted, "(On the contrary) I have not done justice to Ali for he has been killed, whereas I am still alive. O' Mua'wiyah! Our rage towards you still smoulders in our hearts. Do know that (the pain of) having our throats slit or the agony of death is (easier for us to bear than hearing bad comments about Ali (a.s.)."(۱

The Fairness of Abu Dharr (۴

On the way towards the battle of Tabuk(۲), Abu Dharr fell behind the army because he was mounted on a slow animal. When the others realized this, they notified the Holy :Prophet (s.a.w.), who said

".If he possesses goodness in him, God shall make him reach you"

Meanwhile, Abu Dharr, disappointed with his animal, dismounted and proceeded on foot. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) found a convenient place and had decided to pitch the tents, when one of the Muslims shouted that there was someone in the distance .approaching them

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) prayed

!O' Lord! May it be Abu Dharr

:The others informed him that it was indeed Abu Dharr. The Prophet supplicated

May Allah forgive Abu Dharr! He travels alone, shall die alone and shall be resurrected alone. He then asked the people to provide Abu Dharr

.Ibid -١

.Located three hundred miles north of Medinah -٢

.with some water, as he appeared to be thirsty

But when Abu Dharr arrived in his presence, the Prophet (s.a.w.) observed that he had a container of water in his possession, and so asked him, "Abu Dharr! You had water "?with you and yet you remained thirsty

Yes! O' Prophet of Allah! May my parents be sacrificed for you! On the way, I was" overcome by thirst. I reached a place where there was some water. Tasting it, I found it to be cold and delicious and so said to myself: (It is not fair) if I drink this water .before the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)," replied Abu Dharr

Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "O' Abu Dharr! May Allah forgive your sins! You shall lead your life in solitude, die as a stranger, away from home, and enter (Paradise alone."(١

Altruism .١١

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ يُوثِرُونَ عَلىَ اَنْفُسِهِم وَ لَوْ كاَنَ بِهِم خَصاَصَهٌ

(And prefer (the Mohajirs) over themselves though poverty may afflict them.)(٢)

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

اَيُّما اِمرِئٍ اِشتَهی شَهوَةً فَرَد شَهوَتَهُ وَ آثَرَ عَلیَ نَفسِهِ غُفِرَ لهُ

One, who covets something, (but) suppressing his desire gives others preference) (over himself, shall have his sins forgiven.)(٣

Short Explanation

The highest degree of generosity and munificence is altruism. An altruistic person, despite having his own acute needs and necessities, makes a sacrifice by giving .others preference over himself

Even the act of giving alms occupies a lower rank than altruism. Attaining the pleasure of Allah plays a

p: ۷۰

Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۹; Al-Isaabah, vol. ۴, pg. ۶۵ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hashr (۵۹), vs. ۹ -۲

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۱۸ -۳

pivotal role in it. If a person, in an effort to save the life of a drowning person, gets drowned himself, the commendation from the Lord for this self-sacrifice, is a .thousand times more than that for the alms which he pays out

The Altruistic Slave (١

A'bdullah Ibn Ja'far, the husband of Hadhrat Zainab (a.s.) was a person whose generosity was unparalleled. Once, as he happened to pass by a palm-plantation, he noticed a slave working there. At that very moment, the slave's food was brought and handed over to him. As he was about to start his meal, a hungry dog came before him, .wagging its tail

The slave placed a portion of his food before the dog and the animal immediately ate it up. The slave put some more food in front of the dog and before long it was eaten .too. This continued till he had given his entire food to the dog

A'bdullah, who had been witnessing the incident, asked the slave, "What is your daily "?ration of food

.The amount which you have just witnessed," the slave answered"

If that is the case, why then did you give the dog preference over yourself?" enquired" .A'bdullah

This dog had come from afar and was hungry and I did not deem it appropriate to" ".drive him away in that state of hunger

"?With what will you satiate yourself today"

.I shall overcome my hunger by patience and steadfastness," the slave explained"

A'bdullah, observing the slave's selflessness and altruism, thought to himself that the slave was

more generous than himself. By way of commendation and compensation for his altruism, A'bdullah purchased the slave and the plantation from the owner, freed the (slave and finally gifted the entire plantation to him.(١

The Incident of the Mosque of Merv (٢

:Abu Muhammad Azdi narrates

When the mosque of Merv caught fire, the Muslims assumed that it was the work of .the Christians and retaliated by setting their houses ablaze

When the king came to know of this act, he ordered those involved in the incident to be arrested and punished. He ordered that the culprits should face one of three types of punishment - death, severing of a hand or whipping. Each punishment was to be written on a small piece of paper which was then placed in a box. Every guilty person was required to draw a piece from the box and would be subjected to the punishment .written on it

When one of these people picked and read his paper, he broke down in tears because .his sentence was the death penalty

A young boy, who appeared to be happy as he was to be punished with lashes, asked :the distressed person

Why are you agitated and weeping? These punishments should not be a problem in" ".the path of serving the religion

The first person responded, "We have served our religion and therefore do not fear death, but the truth is that I have an old mother, and since I am her only son, she is entirely dependant upon me. When she hears about my death, she

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.Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ١١۴; Al-Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۶, pg. ٨٠ -١

".will not survive

Having heard this, the youth reflected for a while and then said, "Neither is my mother alive nor do I have an attachment with anyone. Let us exchange our punishment so that I get killed instead of you and you face the lashes, after which you can return ".home to care for your mother

The two exchanged their punishment; the youth was killed, while the other person, (after being lashed, returned home to his mother.(١

(The Battle of Yarmuk (Tabuk (٣

In the battle of Yarmuk, a group of Muslim soldiers would go out for battle everyday. After a few hours of confrontation, the unhurt and those who had minor injuries .would return, while the wounded or dead would be left on the battlefield

:Hudhaifah U'dwi, recounts

One day, my cousin, together with some other soldiers, set out for the battlefield. Unfortunately, after the conclusion of the day's battle, he failed to return. Picking up a container of water, I set out for the battlefield, hoping to provide him with a drink in .case he happened to be alive

After searching for sometime, I found my cousin who was barely alive. I stooped down beside him and asked him if he needed some water. He nodded. At that very moment, another soldier, who lay near him, heard me and then sighed loudly to .indicate that he was very thirsty

My cousin signalled to me to provide water to the soldier first. As I went to attend to .the injured soldier, I realized that he was Hishaam Ibn A'as

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ٢, pg. ۴٣۵; Mustatraf, vol. ١, pg. ١۵٧ -١

I asked him whether he needed water.He signalled in the affirmative. Instantaneously, another injured soldier demanded water and Hishaam too refused to drink the water before the other soldier had drunk it. I moved towards the third soldier, but just as I reached him, he breathed his last. Returning to Hishaam, I observed that in this ensuing period, he too had died. I hastened towards my cousin, only to find him dead too!(۱)۱۰۱

Imam Ali in Place of the Holy Prophet (۴

When the leaders of Quraish realised that the inhabitants of Madinah had pledged their loyalty to the Prophet, their hatred towards him intensified. Consequently, their leaders decided that on the eve of the first of Rabi' al-Awwal, one brave person from every tribe would gather together, besiege the Prophet's house and kill him as he lay .asleep in his bed

:(.God divulged their sinister plan to the Prophet, who said to Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s

As the polytheists intend to murder me tonight, God has ordered me to migrate. Will" "?you sleep in my place so that they do not find out that I have gone

.O' Prophet of Allah! Will you remain alive and well if I do this?" Ali (a.s.) asked"

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) confirmed that he would. Hearing this, Amirul Mu'mineen's (a.s.) face lit up with delight and he fell down in prostration of thanksgiving (to the Almighty Lord). He then said, "May my life be sacrificed for you! Go wherever God has ordered you to go; if you

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۷۳; Mustatraf, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۵۶ -۱

need me to do any work for you, just command me, and I shall unconditionally ".perform it, and from God I seek grace and success

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) took Ali (a.s.) in his arms, wept profusely and entrusted him to the protection of Allah. Then, Jibraeel took the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) by the hand .and led him out of the house and towards the cave of Thaur

That night, Amirul Mu'mineen slept in the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) bed and covered .himself with his cloak

The infidels had initially intended to attack the house in the darkness of the night, but Abu Lahab, who was also with them, advised against it saying that it was night and the women and children were asleep. He told them to wait till morning. When morning dawned, they rushed into the house only to find Ali (a.s.) in the Prophet's bed. They .asked him where Muhammad was

Did you leave him with me (that you now ask me about him)? You wanted to get rid of" .him (and so) he has gone away himself," he retorted

They left Ali (a.s.) and set off in pursuit of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w).(۱)۱۰۲

However, it was as a result of this act of self-sacrifice on the part of Ali (a.s.), that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) remained alive and unharmed. God revealed the following verse (.on this occasion. It pertains to Ali (a.s

And among men is he, who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is Affectionate to the

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The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) remained in the Cave -۱ of Thaur for three days and on the fourth day proceeded towards Medinah, entering it on the ۱۲th of Rabi' al-Awwal in the ۱۳th year after the proclamation of Prophethood, .and from this migration commenced the Islamic calendar

(servants.(١

The Self–Sacrifice of Haatim Taai (٥

Once, there was a severe famine in the place where Haatim Taai was staying. The provisions had dwindled until there was nothing left and the people were suffering .intense hunger and hardship

:Haatim's wife narrates

One night, there was not a morsel to be found in our house. Haatim, my two children, .A'di and Safaanah and myself, found that we could not sleep due to our hunger

With great difficulty, Haatim put A'di to sleep while I did likewise with Safaanah. Haatim then began to narrate a story with the intention of putting me to sleep, but the intensity of hunger kept me awake. All the same, I pretended to be so fast asleep that .even when he called out to me several times, I did not reply back

Haatim had been gazing into the desert from a hole in the tent, when he noticed a silhouette, advancing towards us. As it came nearer, Haatim realised that it was a lady :and called out

"?Who is it"

The lady bemoaned, "Haatim, my children are howling like wolves owing to their ".hunger

Haatim told the woman not to worry, as he would remove their hunger. Hearing this, I .got up from my place and asked him how he would do it

".He said, "I shall feed every one

He then proceeded towards the only horse which we possessed and which we utilized :to transport our belongings. He sacrificed it and gave a portion of it to the lady saying

"Cook it and feed it to your

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١ - Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah(٢), vs. ٢٠٧.وَ مِنَ النَاسِ مَن يَّشْرِى نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغاءَ مَرْضاَتِ اللهِ وَ اللهُ رَؤُفٌ بِالْعِبَاد

".children." Turning to me, he said, "Awaken the children so they can eat too

After a short while, he added, "It is a great shame to eat while others sleep beside you ".with an empty stomach

He proceeded to wake them up himself. Everyone ate the meat, except Haatim, who (sat and derived pleasure out of watching them eat.(١

Harassment .١٢

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

اَنَّ الَّذِینَ یُؤْذُونَ اللهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللهُ فِی الدُّنْیَا وَ الْآخِرَه

Verily those who annoy Allah and His Messenger - Allah has cursed them in this World) (and in the Hereafter.)(٢

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

لَا یَحِلُّ لِلْمُسلِمِ اَن یُشِیْرَ اِلَی اَخِیهِ بِنَظْرَهٍ تُؤذِیهِ

It is not permissible for a Muslim to look at a brother Muslim in a manner that hurts) (and inconveniences him.)(٣

Short Explanation

All creatures belong to the household of (the Creation of) God and pre-eminent amongst them are the believers. Any person who is of benefit to the creation, becomes the beloved of God, while one who harasses and inconveniences others, .especially the believers, in any way, is as if he has declared war upon God

On the Day of Judgment, God shall call out: Where are those who harassed and tormented My friends in the world. A group of people whose bodies would be bare of .flesh, would step forward whereupon God shall order them to be hurled into Hell

Thus, it is essential to refrain from hurting and harassing others - parents,

neighbours, friends, and so on. If one has committed this act, forgiveness ought

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.Raahnama-e-Sa'adat, vol. ٢, pg. ٣٥٠; Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ١. pg. ٢٠٨ -١

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Ahzaab (٣٣), vs. ٥٧ -٢

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ٢, pg. ٢١٥ -٣

.to be sought from those concerned

Harassment of Imam Sajjad (١

During the time of Imam Sajjad, there lived a person in Madinah, who used to make .people laugh to earn his livelihood

Some people suggested that they should invite Imam Sajjad (a.s.) and allow this person to make him laugh a little in an attempt to sidetrack the Imam from his deep lamentation. They gathered together and were on their way to his house when they saw him coming towards them, accompanied by two of his slaves. When the Imam (a.s.) came near, the comediantook the cloak off Imam Sajjad's (a.s.) shoulders and .put it over his own. The people around burst out laughing when they saw this antic

"?The Imam (a.s.) inquired, "Who is this person

The people around him answered, "He is a person who makes people laugh and ".receives money from them for his antics

Inform him that those who expend their lives in a futile way performing absurd acts" .(.shall be the losers on the Day of Judgment," advised the Imam (a.s

After hearing this, the comedian stopped his annoying behaviour and mended his (ways.(١

Qaroon and Prophet Musa (٢

Prophet Musa (a.s.), in the course of propagating his religion, had to face severe adversity and hardship from the likes of Firo'un, Bala'm, Bao'ora and even his cousin Qaroon. Qaroon was immensely rich and possessed so much wealth that several strong youths were required to carry just the keys of his treasury. He was one of the .high ranking and influential nobles, who used to oppress his inferiors

,(.Musa (a.s

۱- Darsi Az Akhlaaq, pg. ۱۲۰; Al-Amaali (Sheikh Mufid), pg. ۱۲۸.

:in compliance with God's orders, sought zakaat from him, but Qaroon used to say

I too possess knowledge of the Torah and am not inferior to Musa in any way; why" should Ipay zakaat to him?"

Eventually, his arrogance forced him to resort to dirty tactics to try to demean Prophet Musa. He approached a woman who was of bad character but was also .extremely beautiful and attractive

He said to her, "I shall pay you a hundred thousand dirhams provided that tomorrow, when Musa (a.s.) is delivering a sermon to Bani Israel, you shout out in front of the ".people that Musa has committed adultery with you

The woman accepted the offer. The next day Bani Israel had gathered and Musa (a.s.), with the Torah in hand, was engaged in preaching to them. Qaroon, in all his finery, was also present in the crowd along with his attendants. Suddenly, the woman stood up, but as she looked at the saintly face of Musa (a.s.), she experienced a :change of heart and cried out aloud

O' Musa! Do know that Qaroon has promised me a hundred thousand dirhams if I" accuse you, in front of Bani Israel, of having committing adultery with me; but (I declare that) you have never committed such an act and God has protected your holy ".personality from such uncleanness

When he heard this, Musa (a.s.) was devastated and heartbroken, and he cursed ".Qaroon by saying, "O' Earth! Seize Qaroon and take him within you

Upon Divine orders, the ground

.underneath split apart and Qaroon and all his wealth fell in

According to another report, Musa had been preaching the people about his Sharia’h :when, in the course of his lecture, he said

A person who does not have a spouse and indulges in adultery shall be punished with“ one hundred lashes and a person who possesses a spouse and (yet) commits ”.adultery, shall be stoned to death

At that moment, Qaroon stood up and remarked, “(Would this be true) even if you ”?were to commit such an offense

.Yes,” replied Musa“

The Bani Israel are under the impression that you have committed adultery withsuch“ ”.and such woman

Bring the lady here,” demanded Musa. “If she testifies to this claim, you are at liberty“ ”.to act according to the law

The woman was brought before Musa (a.s.) who, placing her under oath to speak the :truth, asked her

”?Have I committed adultery with you“

The woman suddenly began to experience a change in her thinking and gave an .answer which was opposite to what she had intended

No! They lie”, she said. “Qaroon paid me such and such amount in order that I level“ ”.this accusation at you

Qaroon stood humiliated while Musa (a.s.) began weeping, fell down in prostration :and supplicated

O’ God! Your enemy has hurt me and sought to disgrace me by means of calumny. If“ ”.I am Your Prophet, grant me ascendancy over him

Then he cursed Qaroon whereupon Divine punishment overtook him and the earth consumed him.(۱)

۳) It is Forbidden to Hurt a Mu'min

Husain Ibn Abi al-A’laa narrates:

I started out for Makkah in

p: ۸۰

۱- Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۲۲; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۱۳, pg. ۲۵۳.

the company of twenty other persons. At every resting place, I would slaughter a goat, in order to provide the people with food. When I arrived in the presence of :Imam Sadiq (a.s.), he said to me

O' Husain! Woe be unto you that you hurt and cause inconvenience to the" ".Mu'mineen

.I seek refuge in God from such an act," I said"

He explained, "I have been informed that at every resting-place you used to slaughter ".a goat for your companions

."Yes, but By God, it was only for His happiness that I acted in this manner"

The Imam (a.s.) continued, "Don't you realize that amongst the group there were some, who desired to possess wealth so they too could perform good deeds like you, ".but not having the means, they have become upset

.I repent over my actions and resolve never to act in that way again," I said"

The Imam (a.s.) advised, "A Mu'min, in the eyes of God, is more honourable than the angels, the mountains, the seven skies, the seven earths and everything that exists in (them."(١

Harassing Amirul Mu'mineen is akin to Harassing the Holy Prophet (۴

A'mr Ibn Shaas Aslami, one of the companions present during the treaty of :Hudaibiyah, narrates

Once, Ali (a.s.) and I had embarked upon a journey towards Yemen. During the journey, I happened to get upset with him and my heart was filled with malice .towards him

As I returned from the trip, I proceeded to the mosque and complained to the people about his behaviour. Unfortunately, it so happened that my words eventually reached the ears

.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۵۳; La-aali al-Akhbaar, pg. ۱۳۵ -۱

.(.of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w

One morning, on entering the mosque, I noticed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) present there together with a few of his companions. As soon as his eyes fell upon me, he gazed at me in anger and continued to do so till I had seated myself.

"O' A'mr! By God, you have surely harassed me!" he said crossly.

I exclaimed, "I seek refuge in God from ever harassing or annoying you."

He said, "Yes, you have troubled me for whoever has troubled Ali (a.s.) has troubled me too."(١)

Maltreatment by Mutawakkil (٥

One of the worst Abbasid caliphs was Mutawakkil, who left no stone unturned in his attempt to harass and torment Imam Hadi (a.s.), the descendants of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), the Shiites and the pilgrims of Imam Husain (a.s.).

The governor of Madinah, A'bdullah Ibn Muhammad, acting on Mutawakkil's instructions, troubled Imam Hadi (a.s.) to such an extent that the Imam (a.s.) was compelled to write a letter of complaint to Mutawakkil.

Later on, Mutawakkil forced the Imam (a.s.) to move from Madinah to Saamarra. Here, he initiated a fresh wave of persecution and harassment, some instances of which follow:

One night, Mutawakkil called Sa'eed, his doorkeeper, and instructed him to climb into Imam's house and snoop around with a view to finding wealth or weapons. If they were found, he should confiscate them.

On another occasion, relying on a false accusation, he ordered a group of Turks to rush into the Imam's house, take possession of everything they could find

.Daastaan-hai Az Zindagi-e-Ali, pg. ١١٢; Mustadrak al-Sahihain, vol. ٣, pg. ١٢٢ -١

and bring him to the court. When the Imam (a.s.) was brought to the court, Mutawakkil was busy consuming wine and (out of mockery) offered it to the holy Imam (a.s.) and said: "Recite poetry for me!"

On yet another occasion, he had the Imam (a.s.) brought before him and ordered four Khazar Jilfi slaves(1) to attack him with swords, but the Imam (a.s.), utilizing the power of Imamate, miraculously repulsed this attack.

In the year 237 A.H., Mutawakkil ordered the grave of Imam Husain (a.s.) and the houses in its vicinity to be destroyed and wanted the area to be used for farming and cultivation.

He decreed that a hand or a leg of anyone who came for the pilgrimage of Imam Husain (a.s.) should be amputated.

U'mar Ibn Faraj, who was made the governor of Makkah and Madinah by Mutawakkil, was ordered to prevent the people from helping or showing kindness to the descendants of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). The people, out of fear, refrained from assisting these descendants whose condition became so miserable and adverse that they did not even have proper garments to wear. This harassment and torture reached such a stage that Muntasir, Mutawakkil's son, out of love for Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) was eventually promptedto murder his own father.(2)

13. Faith

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

يا اَيُّهاَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللهِ وَ رَسُولِهِ وِ الْكِتاَب

(O' You who believe! Believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Book, which He has revealed to His Messenger)(3)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.):

.These were stupid, brutish and wee-eyed people -۱

.Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ۲, pgs. ۳۷۸ – ۳۸۴ -۲

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Nisaa (۴), vs. ۱۳۶ -۳

:said

اَلإيمَانُ عَقْدٌ بِالْقَلْبِ وَ نُطْقٌ بِاللِّسَانِ وَ عَمَلٌ بِالأَرْكَانِ

Faith is (a combination of) conviction in the heart, speaking out by the tongue and) (deeds by the limbs.)(۱)

Short Explanation

The believers are ranked according to their level of faith. Faith has four pillars – tawakkul(۲), tafweedh(۳), ridha(۴) and tasleem(۵) – and one who possesses these pillars, acquires tranquillity and repose, and his faith attains stability and permanence. .The faith of those who are weak in belief is neither stable nor permanent

Did not Imam Sadiq (a.s.) say: (Allah grants the world to His friends and foes alike, but ?(faith, He bestows only to the chosen ones from amongst His creations

Hence, those possessing true and perfect faith have always been in the minority; .'forbearance being their 'minister' and wisdom, the 'commander of their army

Harithah's Martyrdom (۱

One day, after offering the morning prayers in congregation, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) looked around the mosque and his eyes fell upon a youth, Harithah Ibn Maalik Ansaari, who sat with his head lowered in a state of drowsiness. His face was pale, his body thin and weak and his eyes appeared to have sunk into their sockets. The Holy :Prophet (s.a.w.) approached Harithah and inquired

"?What state are you in"

.I find myself as a true believer," replied the youth"

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked, "Everything possesses a truth; what is the truth "?behind what you claim

O' Prophet of Allah! I have become disenchanted with the world," he answered. "I" stay awake (in worship) in the night, and endure thirst

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۱- Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۶۹, pg. ۶۹.

۲- Translator's comments) Relying on God.(

۳- Translator's comments) Entrusting one's affairs to God.(

۴- Translator's comments) Satisfaction and pleasure over Divine decree.(

۵- Translator's comments) Submission to God.(

by observing fasts) in the day. It is as if I am witnessing the A'rsh (Throne) of God and) the scenario of Reckoning, observing the inmates of Paradise meeting each other and ".hearing the shrieks of the inmates of hell

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) remarked, "This is a person, whose heart Allah has illuminated". Then, addressing Harithah, he continued, "You have acquired perception ."and insight, so remain steadfast

Harithah beseeched: "O' Prophet of Allah! Request Allah to grant me martyrdom while "!fighting alongside you

The Prophet prayed to Allah to grant martyrdom to Harithah. A few days later, he dispatched an army for battle and Harithah was included in it. During the battle, Harithah killed nine infidels before he himself was killed, being the tenth soldier from (the Muslim force to taste the nectar of martyrdom.(١

?Who is a Youth (٢

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) once asked the students and companions who had gathered around :him

"?Who is a 'youth"

".A person answered, "Someone who is young in age

The Imam (a.s.) said, "Despite the old age of the People of the Cave, on account of the faith which they possessed, God has referred to them as 'youths'. In verse ١٠ of the .(chapter al-Kahf, He says: When the youths sought refuge in the cave(٢

(He then continued,(٣) "Whoever believes in God and observes piety is a youth."(۴

Levels of Faith (٣

:Imam Sadiq, (a.s.) addressing a saddler, who used to serve him, said

Some Muslims possess one portion of faith, while there are others, who possess two" or three or even seven portions of

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۱- Al-Kafi, vol. ۲, ch.: The Chapter of Reality of Faith, tr. ۲ ANd ۳.

۲- اِذ آوَی الفَتیَةُ اِلیَ الْکَهْفِ

۳- مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللهِ وَ اتَّقَی فَهُوَ الْفَتی

۴- Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۵۸; Tafsir Nur al-Thaqalain, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۴۴.

it. It is inappropriate to burden a person, possessing one portion of faith, with acts suitable for a person possessing two portions of faith. Similarly, it is inappropriate to burden a person who has two portions of faith with acts suitable for a person with three portions of faith."

The Imam (a.s.) continued, "Let me present an example:

Once, there was a man whose neighbour was a Christian. The man invited him to Islam and the Christian agreed and converted to a Muslim.

The next day at dawn, the Muslim knocked on the door of the convert's house. When the convert answered the door, the man told him to perform wudhu, get dressed and accompany him to the mosque for prayers. The neighbour duly obliged and both men proceeded to the mosque. They offered not only morning prayers but also many other prayers until it was sunrise.

The new Muslim wished to return home, when the man asked him:

'Where are you going? The days are short and very soon it will be time for the Dhuhr prayers. Let us wait until we have offered our Dhuhr prayers.'

So they waited till it was Dhuhr, when they offered their prayer. The convert prepared to leave but the man persuaded him to stay until A'sr time. They offered A'sr prayer after which the convert decided to go. The man told him that it was almost sunset and that they should not go before offering Maghrib prayer. He then persuaded his neighbour

.to stay for the E’sha prayer also

.Finally, they went back home

The next dawn, the man again knocked on the door of the convert and asked him to .go to the mosque with him

The newly converted Muslim retorted, ‘For this religion of yours, seek someone who has more time on his hands than me. I am a poor person and have a family to feed ’!and look after

The Imam (a.s.) concluded, “The ignorant Muslim reverted him to his original faith of (Christianity.”(١

The Faith of Sa’eed Ibn Jubair (۴

Sa’eed Ibn Jubair was one of the steadfast and loyal companions of Imam Sajjad (a.s.). Hajjaaj was a bloodthirsty tyrant who had ruled over Kufah, Iraq and Iran for almost twenty years after being appointed by the Bani Umayyah and Bani Marwaan. He had killed nearly one hundred and twenty thousand people during his reign, and amongst the friends and descendants of Ali (a.s.) murdered by him, were individuals .like Kumail Ibn Ziyaad, Qanbar, the slave of Ali, (a.s.) and Sa’eed Ibn Jubair

Hajjaaj ordered Sa’eed to be arrested when he became aware of Sa’eed’s belief and .(.inclination towards Imam Ali (a.s

Initially, Sa’eed fled to Isfahan, but when Hajjaaj came to know of this, he wrote to the governor of Isfahan, seeking his arrest. The governor possessed a high regard for .Sa’eed and therefore advised him to leave Isfahan for a safer resort

Acting upon this advice, Sa’eed set out towards Qum and then proceeded to Azerbaijan and then to Iraq where he sought to enter

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ٢, pg. ۴٧٩; Al-Kafi, ‘The chapter of Levels of Faith’, tr. ٢ -١

the army of A'bd al-Rahmaan Ibn Muhammad, who had initiated a rebellion against Hajjaaj.

A'bd al-Rahmaan was defeated and Sa’eed fled to Makkah where he lived in hiding.

During that period, Makkah was under the rule of Khaalid Ibn A'bdullah Qasri, a ruthless individual, who had been placed there by the Caliph, Waleed Ibn A'bd al-Malik. Waleed wrote to him and gave him the order to arrest the well-known Iraqi personalities who were hiding in Makkah, and to send them to Hajjaj.

Thus, he arrested Sa’eed and had him dispatched to Kufah. At that time, Hajjaaj was in Waasit, a city near Baghdad, where Sa’eed was eventually brought.

Hajjaaj questioned him about himself, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), Ali (a.s.), Abu Bakr, U'mar, Uthmaan and many others and then asked him:

“How should I put you to death?”

“Whatever manner you may adopt to kill me, you are bound to be chastised accordingly, on the Day of Judgment,” replied Sa’eed.

“I would like to forgive you.”

“If the forgiveness is from God, then I seek it, but if it is from you, then I do not desire it,” responded Sa’eed.

Hajjaaj ordered the executioner to sever Sa’eed’s head before him. Despite his hands being tied behind his back, Sa’eed recited the following verse of the holy Qur'an:

Surely I have turned myself, wholly to Him, Who originated the heavens and the earth, being upright, and I am not of the associators.(١)

Hearing this, Hajjaaj ordered his face to be turned away from the Qiblah, whereupon he recited the following

۱ - Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Ana'am (۶), vs. ۷۹. إِنِّی وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِیَ لِلَّذِی فَطَرَ السَّمـاواتِ وَ الْأَرْضَ حَنِیفاً وَ ما أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِکِینَ

:verse

(Whithersoever ye turn, there is the presence of Allah(١)

When Hajjaaj heard this, he ordered his men to place Sa'eed's face down, upon the :ground. When this was done, Sa'eed recited the following verse

From the (earth) did We create you, and into it shall We return you, and from it shall (We bring you out once again(٢)

"!Hajjaaj shouted, "Don't waste any more time! Kill him

Sa'eed testified to the Unity of God and the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and prayed: O' God! Do not grant Hajjaaj respite after me in order that he does not kill .anyone else. As he uttered these words, the executioner severed his head

After the martyrdom of this epitome of perfect faith, Hajjaaj suffered a derangement of his senses and did not live for more than fifteen nights. Before his death, he would :occasionally lose consciousness, but regaining it, he would repeatedly mutter

Why did I ever get involved with Sa'eed Ibn Jubair?"(٣)١٢٧"

Salman Farsi's Rank (۵

Faith has ten ranks and Salman Farsi was on its tenth rank. He possessed knowledge of the unseen, the ability to interpret dreams and misfortunes, was well versed in genealogy and had even been favoured with gifts of Paradise, in this world. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Whenever Jibraeel would descend, he would, on behalf of God, "!say: Convey my salutation to Salman

Here is an example of the high degree of Salman's faith. Once, Abu Dharr paid Salman a visit. Salman had placed a utensil

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١- Ibid, ch. Al-Baqarah (٢), vs. ١١٥ .فَأَيْنَما تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ

۲- ۵۵ .Ibid, ch. Taha (۲۰), vs. مِنْها خَلَقْناكُمْ وَ فِيها نُعِيدُكُمْ وَ مِنْها نُخْرِجُكَمْ تارَةً أَخْرى

۳- ۳۹-۴۵ .Daastaan-ha-e-Maa, vol. ۲, pgs.

over the fire to heat its contents. The two men sat together for some time, talking to each other, when suddenly the vessel toppled over, but to Abu Dharr’s amazement, its contents did not spill. Salman, picking the utensil up, placed it back upon the fire. A little later, the vessel fell over again, but once again its contents did not spill. Again .Salman picked it up and placed the vessel upright

Amazed, Abu Dharr hurried out of Salman’s house and was lost in contemplation over what he had witnessed. He happened to come across Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) on the .way and narrated the incident to him

:Having heard Abu Dharr’s narration, the Imam (a.s.) said

If Salman were to inform you of all that he possesses knowledge of, you would surely“ say: ‘May God have mercy upon the murderer of Salman.’ O’ Abu Dharr! Salman is the ‘door’ of God upon the earth. One, who recognises his status, is a Mu'min while one, (who rejects him, is an infidel. Salman is (one) of us, Ahlul Bayt.”(۱

Brotherhood .۱۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّما الْمُؤمِنُونَ اِخْوَةٌ

(The believers are but brethren)(۲)

:Imam Baqir (a.s.) said

عَلَيکَ بِاِخْوانِ الصِّدْقِ فَإِنَّهُم عُدَّةٌ عِندَ الرَّخاءِ وَ جُنَّةٌ عِندَ الْبَلاءِ

It is incumbent) upon you to take true friends for yourself, for they are an asset, in) (times of ease and a shield, during adversities(۳

Short Explanation

At any age, brotherhood and friendship are necessary for someone, who is worthy of

them. Allah has not bestowed upon

p: ۹۰

.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۱۴ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat (۴۹), vs. ۱۰ -۲

.Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۷۸, pg. ۲۵۱ -۳

His servants a bounty more important than success in keeping and associating with religious friends.

But do you not observe that the primary Grace which God granted to the Prophets at the time of their Prophethood was a friend, brother and wali? It is apparent from this that after the bounty of cognizance of God and His Prophets, there is no bounty more pure and pleasant than brotherhood in the path of God and a righteous friend.

One ought to refrain from entering into friendship and brotherhood with those, who seek these alliances out of avarice or worldly motives. A few brothers (in religion) who possess great cognizance, are better than numerous ones who lack this attribute.(١)

A Mu'min is the Brother of Another Mu'min (١

Imam Baqir (a.s.) related:

Once, a group of Muslims had set off on a journey, but in the course of their travel, they lost their way. Their supplies were soon exhausted and they were overcome by intense thirst.

With no water in sight and imagining their end to be near) they put on their shrouds) and sat down, resting themselves against the trees.

Suddenly, an old man in white apparels approached them and said:

"Arise, for you have nothing to fear. Here is some water for you."

They scrambled for the water and drank to their fill after which, turning to the old man, they said, "May God have mercy upon you! Who are you?"

"I belong to the Jinn community, who had pledged allegiance to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). I had heard him say: 'A

١- Tadhkirah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ٥٢.

Mu'min is the brother of another Mu'min. He is his eyes and his guide (too).' I could not allow you to die of thirst, while I was here."(1)

2) Bond of Brotherhood

Muhammad Ibn A'jlaan narrates:

I was in the company of Imam Sadiq (a.s.) when a man, from a distant city, arrived and greeted the gathering.

"How were your brothers when you took leave of them?" the Imam (a.s.) asked him.

The man spoke well of them and praised them a great deal. The Imam (a.s.) then questioned, "Do the rich visit the indigent ones when they fall sick?"

He said that they seldom did.

The Imam (a.s.) carried on, "Do the rich seek to know the condition of the impoverished ones?"

"Rarely" answered the man.

"Do the affluent ones help out the poor and the needy?"

The man responded, "You speak of attributes, which are rare amongst our people."

The Imam (a.s.) remarked, "How then do these people consider themselves to be (our) Shiites (when there exists no bond of brotherhood between the affluent and the impoverished ones)."(2)

3) At the Door of a Brother

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said:

An angel was once passing by a house, when he witnessed a man standing near its door. The angel questioned him, "Why do you stand here?"

"This is the house of my brother and I wish to greet him," answered the man.

The angel asked, “Is he of your kith and kin or is it that you are in need of his help that ”?you have come to pay him a visit

The reality is not as you make it“

p: ٩٢

.Al-Kafi, vol. ٢, ‘The Chapter of Brotherhood of the Mu'mineen’, tr. ١٠ -١

Al-Kafi, vol. ٢, ‘The Chapter of The Right of a Mu'min upon his brother’, tr. ١٠ -٢

out to be. We are just brethren in faith and I only wish to meet him and greet him for .”the sake of God

I am God’s messenger towards you,” the angel said. “He has sent you His greetings“ and has said: O’ My Servant! You have paid Me a visit and desired My pleasure and so, as a reward for upholding the rights and sanctity of religious brotherhood, I have made Paradise compulsory for you and have distanced you from My fire and (wrath.”(١

The Benevolent Governor (۴

:An inhabitant of the city of Rey, narrates

One of the scribes of Yahya Ibn Khaalid was appointed as governor of Rey. I had some taxes to pay and feared that the new governor would extract it from me, for in such a case, I would face very difficult times. Some of my friends informed me that he was a follower of the holy Imams (a.s.), but I was fearful that if it was not so, he would .not hesitate to put me behind bars

With the intention of performing Hajj, I presented myself in the presence of Imam Musa Kadhim (a.s.) and informed him of my predicament. The Imam (a.s.) wrote a :letter to the governor, the contents of which were as follows

In the name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Compassionate. Do know that beneath the A’rsh (Throne) of God, there exists a shade of Mercy into which none shall enter except he who exhibits goodness and kindness towards his

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۸۱; Jaame’ al-Akhbaar, pg. ۱۱۸ -۱

brother-in-faith, liberates him from his sorrow and endeavours to make him happy. .Behold! The bearer of this letter is one of your brethren. Wassalaam

After returning from Hajj, one night I proceeded to the governor's house and asked the sentry to tell the governor that a person had brought a message from Imam .(.Kadhim (a.s

As soon as he was informed, the governor rushed out towards the door in sheer delight. He was barefooted and took me into his arms, repeatedly kissing my .forehead and inquiring after the Imam's well being

Having gone through the Imam's (a.s.) letter, he gave me half of all the money and clothes he possessed, and as for the things which could not be divided, he gave me :the monetary equivalent of half its value, asking me after each distribution

"?Have I made you happy"

".I would reply, "By God! You have pleased me greatly

He took out his register and erasing all the debts written across my name, handed me .a letter which contained an order, exempting me from all taxes

I took his leave and said to myself, "This person has been immensely kind to me and there is no way I can repay his munificence. Let me go for Hajj again and pray for him ".there and also inform the Imam (a.s.) of his generosity and kindness

That year I started out for Makkah and presenting myself before the Imam (a.s.), informed him of what had transpired. As I narrated the events, I

:observed that his face continually brightened up with delight and so I inquired

”?Have his deeds pleased you“

He said, “By Allah! His deeds have truly pleased me and he has (also) pleased God, the (Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.).”(١

Imam Ali, the Brother of the Holy Prophet (۵

One of the extremely significant steps undertaken by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w), five or eight months after his migration to Madinah, was to establish the bond of .(brotherhood between the Muhaajir (The Emigrants) and the Ansaar (The Helpers

:A'bdullah Ibn A'bbas says

When the verse

إِنَّماَ الْمُؤمِنُونَ اِخْوَةٌ

The believers are but brethren)(٢) was revealed, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) proclaimed) brotherhood to be a general law amongst the Muslims and, taking into consideration their ranks and positions, established the bond between every two persons by making one the brother of the other; Abu Bakr with U'mar, U'thman with A'bd al-Rahmaan .and so on

Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) had stretched himself on the ground, when the Holy Prophet :(s.a.w.) approached him and said

Arise, O' Abu Turaab! By God! I have not made you the brother of anyone for I have “ (kept you for myself.”(٣

Independence .۱۵

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَينَيکَ اِلَيماَ مَتَّعْناَ بِهِ اَزواَجاً مِنهُم

(Do not strain your eyes after what We have provided with some of them pairs among them to enjoy) [4]

:Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said

شَرَفُ الْمُؤْمِنِ قِيَامُ اللَّيْلِ وَ عِزُّهُ اسْتِغْنَاؤُهُ عَنِ النَّاس

(The honour of a Mu'min lies in nocturnal worship and his esteem lies in his being independent of the people). [5]

Short Explanation

Contrary to the reprehensible attribute of greed is the attribute of independence

p: ۹۵

۱- Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۷; Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۱۱, 'The Biography Of Imam Kadhim (peace be upon him).'

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat (۴۹), vs. ۱۰.

۳- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۸۲; Kashf al-Ghummah; Tafseer al-Burhaan.

۴- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hijr (۱۵), vs. ۸۸.

۵- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۰۸.

and self-reliance. In common usage, if it is said that a person has no need for anything, the immediate notion that comes to mind is that he is affluent. However, the actual meaning is to be self-sufficient, self-contained and not avaricious with respect to that which the others possess.

Persons who are independent with respect to God's creation, are highly respected and they possess 'trust in God' which is, by far, the greatest asset.

The fact that begging and seeking from others is censured, is because it erodes away the honour and status of a person, makes him a captive of others and lessens his inclination toward God.

A Lesson from the Holy Prophet (۱

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) once found himself in severe poverty. His wife advised him to go to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and request his help.

The man approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), but as soon as the Prophet's (s.a.w.) eyes fell upon the man, he said:

"If a person seeks something from me, I shall certainly grant it to him, but if he were to exhibit himself as being self-sufficient and free from want, Allah shall make him affluent."(۱)

Hearing this, the man said to himself, "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has intended me by this speech of his."

Without uttering a word, he returnedhome and narrated the incident to his wife.

His wife said, "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) is also human; explain your dilemma to him and see what he has to say."

The man returned to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

١- مَنْ سَأَلَنَا اَعْطَيْنَاهُ وَ مَنْ اِسْتَغنَى اَغْنَاهُ الله

for the second time but heard the same sentence from him and again came back home without saying a word. When this was repeated for the third time, the man borrowed a pickaxe from one of his friends and set off towards the mountains. Throughout the day he worked hard to gather firewood, which he sold for some flour .and that night, he and his wife had bread for dinner

The next day, he worked harder and collected more firewood and this continued for .several days till he was able to purchase a pickaxe for himself

After some period, as a result of his hard work, he managed to purchase two camels .and a slave, and slowly became one of the affluent ones

One day, arriving before the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), he narrated to him the events of his :life and the effect of his words, whereupon the Prophet (s.a.w.) responded

I had said (before): One who seeks to be independent (of others), Allah shall make" (him independent."(١

Alexander And Deozhan (٢

When Alexander was selected the supreme commander of Greece, people from all walks of life approached him to congratulate him upon his selection. However, Deozhan, the well-known philosopher, did not go to meet him and so Alexander himself went to meet Deozhan. Deozhan was a person, who followed the policy of .contentment, self-sufficiency and not depending on people

As he was lying under the sun, he sensed that a large group of people was approaching him. He raised himself slightly, when his eyes fell

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.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ٣, pg. ١٢٩; Wafi, vol. ٢, pg. ١٣٩ -١

upon Alexander, who was advancing with great pomp and grandeur; but Deozhan behaved just as he would behave if an ordinary person visited him.

Alexander greeted him and said, "If you need anything from me, just speak out!"

"I have only one request," said Deozhan. "I had been enjoying the warm sunshine and presently you are obstructing it. Could you move over to one side?"

Those accompanying Alexander considered this speech to be very foolish and imprudent and spoke amongst themselves, saying:

"What a foolish man he is to have wasted such an opportunity!"

But Alexander, who felt dwarfed before the towering contentment and self-sufficiency of Deozhan, fell into deep reflection at these words.

On the way back he turned to his companions who had ridiculed Deozhan and remarked: "Indeed, had I not been Alexander, I would have desired to be Deozhan."(١)

٣) Not under Obligation of Avicenna

It has been narrated that once, Avicenna, in great ministerial splendour and fanfare, was passing by a sweeper, who was reciting this poem loudly whilst performing his menial work:

O' Soul! I have held you in high esteem, so that you are a means of serenity for the heart.

Hearing this, Avicenna smiled and said to him (derisively), "Indeed, you have truly held your soul in high esteem by engaging yourself in such (lowly) work."

The sweeper stopped his work, turned to him and said, "I make my living by means of this lowly work so that I am not compelled to be under the obligation of the lofty Avicenna."(٢)

۴) The Recitation of Surah Al-Waaqia'h

A'bdullah Ibn Masu'd had been one of the

p: ۹۸

۱- Riwaayat-ha Wa Hikaayat-ha, pg. ۳۹; Daastaan-ha-e-Paraakandeh; vol. ۲, pg. ۶۶.

۲- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۶۲; Naameh-e-Daanishwaraan.

close companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and had developed into being a distinguished and zealous personality of Islam. During the caliphate of U'thman, he suffered a bout of illness, which eventually resulted in his death.

U'thman once came to pay him a visit and finding him distressed, asked, "What distresses you so greatly?"

"My sins," he answered.

"Tell me your wish so that I can fulfill it for you."

"I desire God's mercy", replied Ibn Mas'ud.

The caliph asked, "If you permit, I could call for the doctor."

"It is the Doctor who has made me sick."

"If you want, I could present you with gifts from the Public Treasury."

Ibn Masu'd retorted, "At the time when I was in need, you did not give me a thing and now that I am not in need, you wish to shower me with presents!"

U'thman insisted, "Let these gifts be for your daughters then."

"They are not in need of your presents," Ibn Masu'd replied tersely. "I have instructed them to recite the chapter Al-Waaqia'h every night, for surely, I have heard the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) say: One, who recites the chapter Al-Waaqia'h every night, shall never be afflicted by poverty."(١)

١۶. Stinginess

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَ يَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَ يَكْتُمُونَ ما آتاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَ أَعْتَدْنا لِلكافِرِينَ عَذاباً مُهِيناً

(Those who are niggardly and bid people to be niggardly and hide what Allah has

given them out of His grace; and We have prepared for the unbelievers a disgraceful chastisement.)(۲)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said:

جَاهِلٌ سَخِیٌّ اَحَبُّ

p: ۹۹

۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۷, pg. ۱۱۲; Majma' al-Bayaan, vol. ۹, pg. ۲۱۱.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Nisaa (۴), vs. ۳۷.

اِلَی اللهِ مِنْ عابِدٍ بَخِیلٍ

An ignorant but generous person is more beloved to Allah than one, who is devout) (but parsimonious.)(۱)

Short Explanation

Stinginess, or refraining from giving things to others and collecting wealth and riches for oneself, is one of the signs of love for the world. It impedes one from adorning oneself with several praiseworthy virtues like charity, munificence, self-sacrifice and helping others. It is for this reason that the holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: No miser .shall enter Paradise

Stinginess is such a repugnant vice that if a person gets afflicted with it, he keeps his family in poverty, detests guests coming to his house, abstains from visiting others in order that none visit him, withholds himself from associating with generous persons and feels uneasy about other people's generosity. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) always (sought refuge in God from this deadly vice.(۲)

The Miser's Sin (۱

Once, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was engaged in circling the Ka'bah seven times when he witnessed a man holding the curtain of the Ka'bah and imploring: O' God! By the !sanctity of this House, forgive me

.Approaching him, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)asked him about his sin

".The man replied, "My sin is too enormous for me to describe to you

.(.Woe be unto you! Is your sin greater or the earth?" asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w"

".My sin"

"?Is your sin greater or the mountains"

".My sin"

"?Is your sin greater or the Throne of God"

".My sin"

"?The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) then asked, "Is your sin greater or God

,To this the man replied

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۱۰ -۱

.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ۹۶ -۲

".God is the Greatest, Loftiest and the Most Glorious"

."The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) exclaimed, "Woe be unto you! Inform me of you sin

The man explained, "O' Prophet of God! I am a wealthy person, but whenever a poor man approaches me for help, I feel as if a bolt of fire has approached me."

:On hearing this, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) warned

"Stay away from me and do not burn me in your fire! By He, Who has sent me with Guidance and Honour, if you were to offer prayers between al-Rukn and al-Maqaam (around the Ka'bah) for two thousand years and weep in such a measure that your tears flow as rivers and quench the trees, and after all this, if you were to die while still possessing the vice of stinginess, God would hurl you into Hell. Woe be unto you! But do you not know that Allah has said:

And whoever is niggardly is niggardly against his own soul(1) and He has also said: And whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, is among the successful ones."(2)

2) Mansur Dawaaniqi and his Stinginess

Mansur Dawaaniqi, the second Abbasid Caliph, was well known for his stinginess and parsimony. For instance, as a result of his reluctance to part with his money, he would give the poets who came before him the following warning:

If someone, other than you, also happens to know the poetry that you are about to recite or if it is established that it belongs to someone else,

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1- Holy Qur'an, ch. Muhammad (47), vs. 38. (وَ مَنْ يَبْخَلْ فَإِنَّما يَبْخَلُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ) Ibid, ch. Al-Hashr (59), vs. 9 ((وَ مَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

2- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. 2, pg. 110; I'lm-e-Akhlaaq-e-Islami, vol. 2, pg. 154.

you should not expect any prize or reward. And if the poet happened to recite one which was his own, Mansur would give him money according to the weight of the scroll upon which the poetry was written! Furthermore, he possessed a sharp memory and also had a servant and a slave-girl, who were extraordinarily quick at .memorizing things

When a poet recited his poetry, Mansur would say to him: "This, which you have recited for me, is not something new. Not only I, but even this slave of mine and the ".slave-girl, behind the curtains, know it

Then, upon his orders, the slave would recite the poem after which, the slave-girl, having heard its recitation three times - once by the poet, once by Mansur and once by the slave - would also recite it. The astounded poet would then be sent off empty !handed and without any reward

Asmae'e, the renowned poet, became annoyed with the miserliness of Mansur and decided to compose a poem using difficult words and write it on a broken stone pillar. When this was done, he dressed himself up as a tribesman and covered his entire face except his eyes. He then presented himself before Mansur and with a disguised accent, informed him that he had composed some verses and sought his permission .to recite them before him

As usual, Mansur informed Asmae'e of the conditions, which he accepted. Then Asmae'e began reciting the poetry, which comprised of difficult and uncommon

words and intricate and complex sentences.(۱) Mansur with all his acumen, and the slave and the slave-girl with all their sharpness of mind, were unable to memorize it .and for the first time appeared bewildered and taken aback

With no alternative left, Mansur said to him, "O' Brother! It appears that the poetry is ".your own work. Bring me your scroll so that I can reward you according to its weight

Asmae'e said, "I could not find any paper and so I have written my poem on a stone pillar, which presently lies on my camel." He brought the stone pillar and placed it before Mansur, who was totally baffled. He realized that even if he were to place his entire treasury on one side of the scale, it would not match up to the weight of the .stone pillar

"?Turning to the poet and he inquired, "O' Arab! Are you not Asmae'e

Asmae'e took off the covering from his face and everyone observed that the poet (was indeed Asmae'e.(۲

The Four Arab Misers (۳

.It has been said that there were four Arab misers

The first of them was Hatiah. It has been narrated that one day, Hatian was standing :at his doorstep with his staff in his hand when a person, passing by, said to him

".O' Hatiah! I am your guest today"

Pointing to his staff, Hatiah tersely answered, "I use this staff to welcome and "!entertain my guests

The second of the misers was Hameed Arqat. In connection with him, it

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۱- و العود قدد ندندلی، و الطبل طبطبطبلی و الرقص قد طبطبلی، و السقف قد سقسقسقلی

.Daastaan-ha-e-Maa, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۰۲; I'laam al-Naas, pg. ۵۴ -۲

has been reported that once, he invited a few people to be his guests and offered them dates to eat. The guests, while eating the dates, also consumed the seeds .whereupon Hameed created uproar by rebuking them for eating his seeds as well

The third of the misers was a person by the name of Abul Aswad Duali. It has been :related that one day, he gave one date to a pauper, who said

".May God give you one date in Paradise "

Hearing this, Abul Aswad Duali commented, "If we give our things to the miserable "!ones, we shall become more miserable than them

The fourth of the misers was Khaalid Ibn Safwaan, about whom it has been reported :that whenever a dirham would come into his hands, he would say to it

O' Money! How much you have wandered and travelled before coming into my" hands. But (now that you have reached me,) I shall drop you into my safe and your ."captivity shall be a long and protracted one

.Saying this, he would drop the money into his chest and lock it

The people said to him, "Since you possess so much wealth and riches, why don't you "?give some of it as alms

(He replied: "I have a much longer life ahead of me."(۱

Zakaat from Tha'labah Ansaari not Accepted (۴

Once, Tha'labah Ibn Haatib Ansaari approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and :beseeched

".O' Prophet of God! Pray to God that He grants me wealth and riches"

Little wealth for which you are able to offer thanksgiving, is"

.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۹۳; Mustatraf, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۷۱ -۱

better than immense riches for which you are unable to offer thanksgiving," the Holy .Prophet (s.a.w.) advised him

Tha'labah went away but approached the Holy Prophet for the second time, .repeating his request

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "You shall not obey me. By God! If I wished that the ".mountains would turn into gold for me, they would do so

For the second time, Tha'labah went away, but returned a third time and again placed his request before the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and implored, "Do pray for me. I avow ".that if God grants me wealth, whoever possesses a right in it, I shall give it to him

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) prayed for him and God answered his prayers. Tha'labah initially purchased some sheep, which slowly grew in number till they became .plentiful

Earlier, he used to offer all his prayers behind the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) but after his wealth and riches began to increase, he would only be present for the Dhuhr and the .A'sr prayers, and spent the rest of his time looking after his sheep

As time passed, his work increased to such an extent that he could only manage to come to Madinah for the Friday prayers and eventually even this became a thing of the past. He would only come up to the road leading towards Madinah and seek news .of the city from the passers-by

One day, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) inquired about him, whereupon he was informed that Tha'labah's sheep had

increased manifold and he had settled outside Madinah. Hearing this, the Holy ”!Prophet (s.a.w.) cried out three times: “Woe be unto Tha’labah

After a period of time, the verse pertaining to zakaat was revealed. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) selected two people, one from Bani Sulaim and the other from Juhniyah, and .gave them written authority, empowering them to collect the zakaat

Approaching Tha’labah, they read out the order for the collection of zakaat. After :some thought, Tha’labah said

This is Jizyah(poll-tax)or something akin to it. Go and collect it from others and come“ ”.back to me later

They proceeded to a person from the tribe of Bani Sulaim and read out the Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.) orders at which he handed over the best of his camels to them as his zakaat. The collectors explained to him that they had not asked him to give the best of his camels, but he insisted by saying that he was giving the camel through his own .choice

The collectors collected the zakaat from the others and on the way back, again .approached Tha’labah and sought his zakaat

”.He said, “Let me have a look at that decree

After reading it, he once again repeated, “This appears to be Jizyah or something ”.similar to it. Go away and let me ponder over it

The collectors returned to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), but before they could speak he exclaimed: “Woe unto Tha’labah!” and then prayed for the generous person from Bani Sulaim. The

collectors explicitly narrated to him their encounter with Tha’labah whereupon the :following verses were revealed

And there are those of them who made a covenant with Allah: If He gives us out of His grace, we will certainly give alms and we will certainly be of the righteous ones. But when He gave them out of His grace, they became niggardly of it and they turned back and they withdrew. So in consequence He effected hypocrisy e into their hearts till the day when they shall meet Him because they failed to fulfil towards Allah what (they had promised with Him and because they told lies.(١

One of Tha’labah’s relatives, who had been present during the revelation of the above verses, informed him of the incident. On hearing about it, he hastened to the :Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and entreated him to accept his zakaat, but he refused saying

”.God has ordered me not to accept your zakaat“

.Tha’labah was devastated to hear this

This is a consequence of your own deeds. I had ordered you but you refused to“ .comply with my orders,” the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

After the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), Tha’labah approached Abu Bakr, who refused to accept his zakaat. During U'mar’s caliphate, Thalabah approached him, but (he too refused and U'thman too followed suit, till death finally overtook Tha’labah.(٢

Sa’eed Ibn Haroon, the Miser (۵

Sa’eed Ibn Haroon, the scribe from Baghdad and a contemporary of Mamun, the .Abbasid Caliph, was notorious for his miserliness

Abu Ali Di’bil Khazaai, the

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١ - Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Taubah (٩), vs. ٧۵-٧٧. وَ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ عاهَـدَ اللَّهَ لَئِنْ آتانا مِنْ فَضْـلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ فَلَمَّا آتاهُمْ مِنْ فَضْـلِهِ بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَ تَوَلَّوْا وَ هُمْ مُعْرِضُون فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفاقاً فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلى يَوْم يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِما أَخْلَفُوا اللَّهَ ما وَعَدُوهُ

وَ بِما كانُوا يَكْذِبُون

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ١, pg. ٧٣; Asad al-Ghaabbah, vol. ١, pg. ٢٣٧ -٢

:renowned poet (d. ۲۴۵ A.H.) says

Accompanied by some other poets, I had gone to Sa'eed's house and we were with him from morning till afternoon. When the afternoon was approaching, we began to .feel hungry and became restless and disturbed as a result

Sa'eed had an old slave, to whom he said, "If there is something to eat, bring it before us." The slave departed and returned a short while later bringing with him a dirty dinner-cloth. He spread this out before us and laid just one piece of dry bread on it. He then brought an old bowl, broken at the rim and filled with hot water, and which !contained an old, raw and headless cock

As the slave placed the bowl on the dinner-cloth, Sa'eed's eyes fell upon it and noticing the headless cock, he reflected for a moment and then said, "O' Slave! Where "?is the head of this cock

".The slave replied, "I have thrown it away

Hearing this, Sa'eed screamed, "I do not approve of one who throws away the legs of a cock, never mind one who throws away its head. This act (of yours) augurs ill (for :me) for the head of a cock possesses many benefits

Firstly, from its head emanates a sound, which informs God's servants of the time for prayers; by means of it, the sleeping ones awaken and those, who worship in the .nights, ready themselves for the night prayers

Secondly, the crown that lies on its head resembles

the crown of the kings and so, it possesses a distinction in comparison to the other .birds

Thirdly, it witnesses the angels by means of the two eyes, which are located in its skull. In addition, poets liken coloured wine to its eyes because when they desire to ’.describe red wine, they say: ‘This wine is like the two eyes of the cock

Fourthly, the brain in its head is a cure for kidney problems. Besides, no bone is tastier than the bone of its head. If you have thrown it away under the impression that I would not eat it, you have erred greatly. And supposing that I do not eat it, my family would eat it and if they do not eat it, these guests of mine, who have not eaten ”.anything since morning, would eat it

”.He continued angrily, “Go and locate it and should you fail to do so, I shall punish you

”.The slave pleaded “By God! I do not know where I have thrown it

Sa’eed retorted, “By God! I know where you have dropped it; you have dropped it in ”!that ominous looking stomach of yours

”.By God! I have not eaten it,” bemoaned the slave. You are the one who is lying“

Infuriated, Sa’eed stood up and seized the slave by the collar in an attempt to hurl him onto the floor, but in the process his foot struck the bowl tipping it over and spilling its contents. A cat, which

sat nearby, made the most of the opportunity and picking up the headless cock, darted away with it. We too came out of the house, leaving Sa'eed and his slave to themselves, as they grappled with each other.(1)

17. Evilness

point

Allah, the Wise, says:

عَسى ‌ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئاً وَ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ

(It may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you)(2)

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) has said:

وَ إِنَّ الْعَمَلَ السَّيِّئَ أَسْرَعُ فِی صَاحِبِهِ مِنَ السِّكِّينِ فِی اللَّحْمِ

(Surely, the effect of an evil deed upon the doer is faster than that of a knife upon a piece of meat.)(3)

Short Explanation

The worst of people is one, who sells his hereafter in exchange for his worldly life, but worse still is one, who sells his hereafter for the worldly lives of the others.

Evilness manifests itself in numerous forms, all of which could be summarized as disobedience to God.

Since deeds are subordinate to intentions, evil thoughts generate evil deeds. When a person does not have God within his sights, he considers himself to be strong and powerful. He indulges in various acts of evil, without his heart experiencing the slightest fear of Hell.

For each limb and organ of the body there are evil actions which are associated with and specific to them; the ears to backbiting, the eyes to seeing prohibited things, the tongue to lying and the hands to hurting the orphans. It is therefore essential to

.preserve all of them from evil

Misfortune of Jaludi (۱

After the martyrdom of Imam Kadhim (a.s.), Haroon Al-Rashid, the

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.Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ۳۴۱ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah (۲), vs. ۲۱۶ -۲

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۳, pg. ۴۸ -۳

Abbasid Caliph dispatched one of his commanders, a person by the name of Jaludi, to Madinah and instructed him: “Attack the houses of the progeny of Abu Talib, loot the ”!womenfolk and leave behind nothing, except one apparel for each of them

Once in Madinah, Jaludi started to execute Haroon’s orders. As he neared the house of Imam Ridha (a.s.), the Imam (a.s.) gathered all the ladies of the house into one .room and stood at the door, preventing Jaludi from entering

Jaludi insisted that he must enter the house and loot the ladies and take away their apparels. The Imam (a.s.) promised that he himself would collect their clothes and ornaments and hand them over to Jaludi, on the condition that he should abstain from .entering the room

Jaludi eventually acquiesced to the Imam’s request, whereupon he entered the room, gathered the ornaments and clothes of the ladies and, together with the other things of the house, placed them at Jaludi’s disposal, which he promptly dispatched to .Haroon

After Haroon, it was his son Mamun, who took over the reins of the Caliphate. It so happened that one day he became angry with Jaludi and sought to punish him with death. Imam Ridha (a.s.) had been present in that assembly and requested Mamun to .forgive him

Jaludi, recollecting his previous wickedness with respect to the Imam, thought that he :(a.s.) would complain about it to Mamun and so, turning to Mamun, he said

!I place you under the oath of God“

".Do not accept his words in connection with me

Mamun said: "By God! I shall not accept his words." Saying this, he then ordered Jaludi (to be beheaded.(۱)

Deceit by A'mr Ibn A'as (۲

After the incident of arbitration, in which A'mr Ibn A'as tricked Abu Musa Asha'ri and deposed Ali (a.s.) from the caliphate, the Imam (a.s.) used to curse him, Mua'wiyah .and Abu Musa after the morning and Maghrib prayers

A'mr Ibn A'as was also part of the group that was involved in the incident of the night of A'qabah(۲) and had subsequently been cursed by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon .him and his holy progeny) too

When the dispute between Imam Ali (a.s.) and Mua'wiyah intensified, it was decided that the issue should be resolved by means of arbitration. Unfortunately, the people of Iraq selected Abu Musa Asha'ri to represent the Imam (although, the Imam himself was not happy at this selection), whereas Mua'wiyah decided on A'mr Ibn A'as as his .representative

Abu Musa, who was in one of the villages of Shaam, was asked to present himself in Siffeen and four hundred people, amongst them Shuraih Ibn Haani and Ibn A'bbas, accompanied him to Daumah al-Jundal. A'mr Ibn A'as also arrived there with four .hundred of his companions

All the counselling and recommendations provided to Abu Musa proved futile since A'mr Ibn A'as, with the evilness of intention and wickedness of character that he .possessed, was far more powerful than him in shrewdness and deception

One of A'mr Ibn A'as's techniques was to

.Raahnama-e-Sa'adat, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۷۷; Aa'yaan al-Shia'h, vol. ۱, pg. ۶۰ -۱

After the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had proclaimed Ali -٢ (peace be upon him) his successor at Ghadeer Khum, some individuals gathered together and conspired to conceal themselves near a mountain path and startle the camel of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) in order that he is hurled to the ground and killed, and in this manner sought to prevent the caliphate of Ali (peace be upon him) from being established in Madinah, and this is the night, which 'is referred to as the 'night of 'Aqabah

exhibit exaggerated deference towards Abu Musa. He sat him in the front of gatherings and insisted that he lead the prayers, while Amr himself prayed behind him, and all the while addressing him as O' Companion of the Prophet of God! He used to say to him: "You have had a precedence over me with regards to the companionship of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and are elder to me and thus, it is unbecoming of me to speak on something before you have done so."

He presented such an elaborate display of respect that the simple-minded Abu Musa was convinced of his uprightness and became certain that his only intention was to set aright the existing state of affairs. As part of his cunning plan, A'mr Ibn A'as initially took Abu Musa to a secluded place and spoke to him in solitude so as to prevent others from influencing Abu Musa in making a decision.

A'mr Ibn A'as asked him, "Abu Musa, what is your opinion regarding Ali (a.s.) and Mua'wiyah?"

"Let us depose Ali (a.s.) and Mua'wiyah from the caliphate and allow the issue of caliphate to be managed by a Counsel," responded Abu Musa.

Hearing this A'mr Ibn A'as said, "By God! Your opinion is absolutely correct and we must put it into execution."

After agreeing to this course of action, they came out in public.

Abu Musa rose up first and began to speak when Ibn A'bbas cried out, "Be wary, for I fear A'mr Ibn A'as has tricked

".you. Allow him to speak before you

But Abu Musa paid no heed and said, "O' People! A'mr Ibn A'as and I remove Ali and Mua'wiyah from the caliphate and shall (only) approve of a caliph selected by means ".of a Counsel. I hereby remove Ali (a.s.) from the caliphate

Then, the wicked A'mr Ibn A'as stood up and said, "I too remove Ali from the caliphate but appoint Mua'wiyah in his place; Mua'wiyah seeks to avenge U'thman's death and ".is therefore most deserving of this rank

You are like a dog," Abu Musa shrieked out, "that attacks if one approaches it and" ".does the same if one turns away from it

A'mr Ibn A'as retaliated, "And you are like a donkey, which carries a hoard of books ".((but does not benefit from them in the least

In short, A'mr Ibn A'as, supported by his evilness, emerged the victor in the issue of arbitration! Later, Ibn A'bbas used to say: "May God disgrace Abu Musa! I had warned him of the guiles and the evil intentions of A'mr Ibn A'as and advised him rightly, but (he turned a deaf ear and refused to take heed."(۱

Cruelty of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf Thaqafi (۳

It is not just evil deeds which merit chastisement but evil intentions too tend to have an impact. In fact it is due to their evil intentions that the disbelievers and the enemies .(of Islam) shall reside in Hell eternally

Hajjaaj Ibn Yusuf Thaqafi used to exhibit great cruelty and evil by imprisoning and killing the

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.Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۳۹ – ۱۵۳; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۸, pg. ۵۴۴ -۱

.((.saadaat (descendants of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w

Once, while coming out of the mosque and hearing the wailing and crying of a great "?number of people, he asked, "Who are these who wail

Those around him said, "These are the wailings of the captives, who are tormented ".due to the intense heat of the sun

scram away),"which, in the Arabic language, is also employed)اِخسئُوا)He said, " Tell them (for driving away a dog.(۱

His prison contained ۱۲۰,۰۰۰ males and ۲۰,۰۰۰ females (۴,۰۰۰ of the females being single) and was one large area, walled but roofless. Each time the prisoners tried to shelter themselves from the scorching sun, either with their hands or some other .means, the guards overlooking them would strike them with stones

Their food was bread, made of barley and mixed with sand, while their drink was bitter water. At times the blood of the saadaat and the righteous ones would be !utilized for preparing Hajjaaj's bread, which he would eat with great relish

This wicked person always regretted not having been in Kerbala and used to say, "O' How I wish I had been in Kerbala so that I could have had a hand in killing Imam (Husain (a.s.) and his companions!"(۲

Justifying Evil Acts (۴

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) had heard that an old man had become famous for his piety. One day, he saw him surrounded by a large crowd. A little later, the man came out of the crowd and distancing himself from them, proceeded alone, whereupon the Imam (a.s.) began to

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an address to the - (اخْسَـؤُا فِيهـا وَ لاـ تُكَلِّمُـونِ) :Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mu'minun (۲۳), vs. ۱۰۸ - ۱ inmates of Hell

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ٣, pg. ١۶٣; Raudhaat al-Jannaat, pg. ١٣٣ -٢

follow him. After a short time, the Imam (a.s.) observed that he had stopped near a bakery from where he stealthily picked up two loaves of bread. After a short distance, he stopped at a fruit store, picking up two pomegranates in the same manner and once again continued on his way.

As he walked further, the old man approached a sick person, handed over the loaves and fruits to him and was about to move on when Imam Sadiq (a.s.) came up to him and said, “I have witnessed something greatly astonishing from you”, and then proceeded to narrate the acts, which he had witnessed.

The old man said, “I suppose you are Imam Sadiq (a.s.).”

The Imam (a.s.) replied in the affirmative.

The man continued, “It is really unfortunate that in spite of being of the progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) you do not seem to know anything.”

The Imam (a.s.) asked, “What act of ignorance have you noticed from me?”

The man said, “But do you not know that God has said in the Qur'an “Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it”.(۱)

On this basis, since I have stolen two fruits and two loaves of bread, I have four sins in my account, but on the other hand, since I have given it in the way of God, I have earned forty good deeds. Reducing four from forty, I

۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-An’Am (۶), vs. ۱۶۰: (مَنْ جاءَ بِالْحَسَنَهِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثالِها وَ مَنْ جاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَهِ فَلا يُجْزى إِلاَّ مِثْلَها)

still have thirty-six good deeds in my account; a pity that you possess no knowledge of such computations!"

The Imam (a.s.) explained to him, "But have you not heard this verse of the Qur'an, which says: "Allah only accepts from those who guard (against evil)".(۱) You have earned four sins by stealing those four items and four more sins for giving them tosomeone else without the permission of the owners, so you have collected eight sins but not a single good deed."

Later, the Imam (a.s.) said to his companions, "With such interpretations and justifications, not only do they mislead themselves, but others as well."(۲)

۵) The Consequence of Evil Deeds in Barzakh

A distinguished scholar, renowned for his piety, narrates:

One of my relatives had purchased a property during the last years of his life, utilizing the abundant income derived from it, for fulfilling his needs.

After he died, I witnessed him in the purgatory, in a state of blindness. When I asked him reason for it, he replied:

"I had purchased a piece of land, in the centre of which existed a well, whose water was utilized by the inhabitants of a nearby village for themselves and their animals. But their passage through my land used to damage a portion of my crops and so, in order to protect my income and to prevent them from coming in, I filled up the well by means of sand and stones, and covered it up. As a result, the hapless inhabitants were forced to travel a great distance to procure their

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۱- Ibid, ch. Al-Maidah (۵), vs. ۲۷ (إِنَّما يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ)

۲- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۴, pg. ۲۷۵; Wasaail al-Shia'h, vol. ۲, pg. ۵۷.

".water, and this blindness is an outcome of that act of mine

"?I asked him, "Is there any solution to this problem of yours

He replied, "If my heirs were to exhibit mercy upon me and uncover the well so that the others benefit from its water again, I shall come out of this predicament of mine."

Approaching his heirs, I informed them of the incident. They agreed to do the needful and very soon, the well was opened up and the people began to make use of it, as before.

After a period, I again witnessed the deceased, but this time noticed that his sight had been restored and he was thankful to me for helping him come out of his misery.(١)

Misfortunes .١٨

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَاَمَّا الْاِنْسانُ اِذا ما ابْتَلاهُ رَبُّهُ فَاَكْرَمَهُ وَ نَعَّمَهُ فَیَقُولُ رَبِّی اَكْرَمَنِ

(And as for man, when his Lord tries him, then treats him with honor and makes him lead an easy life, he says: My Lord has honoured me.)(٢)

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said

اِنَّ الْبَلاءَ لِلظّالِمِ اَدَبٌ وَ لِلْمُؤمِنِ اِمْتِحانٌ

(Surely, misfortune for an oppressor is a (corrective) chastisement and for a Mu'min, a trial)(٣)

Short Explanation

For someone possessing intellect, misfortunes are a means of ornamentation and esteem. Exercising forbearance when faced with misfortune and being steadfast during trials, strengthens one's faith.

One who bears hardship with patience, shall acquire the Grace of God and, as dictated by the Divine Wisdom, shall attain salvation and comfort, either in this world .or in the hereafter

From within the flames

p: ١١٨

.Daastaan-ha-e-Shigift, pg. ٢٩٢ -١

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Fajr (٨٩), vs. ١٥ -٢

.Jaame' al-Akhbaar, pg. ١١٣ -٣

of misfortune and calamity, emerge the esoteric lights. A person who regards misfortune and calamity as a trial, and combats it successfully, will become that much wiser as a result of the extra knowledge and perception acquired. It is not good practice to constantly complain of worldly misfortunes like poverty, illness, family problems, and so on.

In the Company of Angels (١

One of the patient Muslims, uncomplaining in the face of misfortunes, was a person by the name of I'mraan. He had come to suffer from dropsy(١) and no amount of treatment proved productive.

For thirty years he lay upon his stomach, unable to rise, sit or stand and so, a pit had been dug near his place of rest for his urine and excrement.

Once, his brother A'laa, paid him a visit and observing his pitiful state, burst out in tears. I'mraan asked, "Why do you weep?"

His brother replied, "It is because I see that for years you have been suffering in this pathetic condition."

I'mraan said, "Weep not and do not be disturbed because this state, which God has ordained for me, is dearer to me than anything else; I desire to remain in this condition, which God desires for me, for as long as I am alive. I shall now inform you of a secret, which you must not divulge to anyone for as long as I am alive: I am in the company of the angels; they greet me and I reply to their greetings, and enjoy a

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١ - A sickness, in which a person suffers swelling of the stomach, consumes an inordinate quantity of water and experiences extraordinary thirst. (Farhang-e-A'meed).

(great intimacy with them." (1)

Ali A'abid in Prison (2

Ali A'bid (Ali Ibn Hasan Al-Muthallath) was one of the children of Imam Hasan (a.s.) who had been imprisoned by Mansur Dawaaniqi and had died while still in prison. Ali A'bid was unsurpassed in his patience, worship and remembrance of God.

When Mansur arrested the descendants of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and the children of Imam Hasan (a.s.), he placed them in a prison that was so dark that day could not be differentiated from night, except by means of the recitations and acts of worship of Ali A'abid. These acts were disciplined, orderly and continuous, and therefore made the others aware of the time for prayers.

One day, due to the hardships of captivity and the weight of his fetters, A'bdullah Ibn Hasan Al-Muthanna lost patience and in a state of great agitation, said to Ali A'abid:

"Do you not witness our misfortunes and adversities? Do you not pray to God to grant us relief from this suffering of ours?"

Ali A'abid remained silent for a while after which he said, "O' Uncle! There exists for us a (lofty) rank in Paradise, which we can never achieve except by exhibiting patience over theseor even more severe adversities, and there exists for Mansur a dreadful place within Hell, which he shall never reach except by subjecting us to such persecution. If we are patient, we shall soon find ourselves in ease and comfort, for death is not very far from us. But if you desire,

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١- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ٧, pg. ١٤٨; La-aali al-Akhbaar, vol. ١, pg. ٣٤۶.

I shall pray for our deliverance, but in that case, Mansur shall not reach that stage of wretchedness, which has been ordained for him, within Hell."

Hearing this, A'bdullah immediately said, "We shall be patient."

Hardly three days had passed when, Ali A'abid passed away while in a state of prostration. A'bdullah thought him to be asleep and said, "Wake up my nephew."

As they attempted to move him, they found that he would not wake up and it was then they realized that he had died.(١)

3) An Enemy Ordained for a Mu'min

Prophet Hud (a.s.) used to farm. Once, a group of people came to his house to meet him. His wife came to the door and asked:

"Who is it?"

They replied, "We have come from such and such city, which has been afflicted with famine and we are on the verge of destruction. We have come to Prophet Hud (a.s.) to request him to pray for the rains."

The wife of Hud (a.s.) remarked, "If his prayers had been answered, he would have prayed for himself; his own crops are withering away due to lack of water."

They persisted, "Where is he at present?"

She informed them of his whereabouts whereupon the group approached him and placed their request before him. Prophet Hud (a.s.) offered prayers and then supplicated, after which he turned to them and said, " You may return for it has rained over your city."

But as they sought to take his leave, they asked him, "When we approached your house we had come

١- Maqtal-e-Khwaarzami, vol. ٢, pg. ١٠٨; Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ٢, pg. ١٧٢.

across a lady, who said: 'If the prayers of Hud were to have been answered, would he ?not have prayed for himself'

Prophet Hud (a.s.) said, "That woman is my wife and I pray to God to grant her a long .life." "Why do you pray so?" asked the people

He replied, "God has not created a Mu'min except that He has also ordained an enemy for him to trouble him. This woman is my enemy and an enemy of whom I am the (master, is better than an enemy, who happens to be my master." (١

Muhammad Ibn Abi U'mair Served Three Imams (۴

Muhammad Ibn Abi U'mair had the opportunity of serving Imam Kadhim, Imam Ridha and Imam Jawad (a.s.) and both, the Sunnites and the Shiites, have attested to his .trustworthiness and uprightness

He was a cloth-merchant by profession and financially very well off. He wrote ninety-four books on traditions and jurisprudence. Due to his stateliness, and his knowledge of the names of the Shiites, he used to be greatly troubled during the period of Haroon Al-Rashid and Mamun; he would be abused, imprisoned and his property would be seized. He was asked to become a judge, but he declined the offer; since he was familiar with the Shiites of Iraq, he was asked to reveal their names, but he refused to comply so they flung him into prison and, on numerous occasions, he was whipped so severely that he was barely left alive. Once, upon the orders of Haroon Al-Rashid,

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۶۱۲ -۱

Sindi Ibn Shaahak subjected him to a hundred and twenty lashes and he had to purchase his freedom by paying one thousand dirhams. Financially, he suffered a loss .of a hundred thousand dirhams and his captivity extended for a period of four years

His sister (Sa'eedah or Minnah) gathered all his books and concealed them, but it so happened that one day it rained and all his books were ruined. Later, the traditions that he used to narrate were either from the sharp memory, which he possessed, or from copies, which others had transcribed from his original books before their (destruction.(١

A Long Life is Associated with Misfortunes (۵

It has been reported that once Jibraeel (peace be upon him) approached Prophet Sulaiman (a.s.), bringing with him a bowl containing the Water of Life and said to him: Your Lord has given you the choice that if you so choose, you can drink this water and .remain alive till the Day of Judgment

Sulaiman (a.s.) placing this issue before a group of men, jinn and animals, consulted them and all of them recommended him to consume the water so that he could .become eternal

Sulaiman, after some reflection realized that he had not conferred with the porcupine and so sent a horse to call him, but the porcupine did not arrive. He then sent a dog !after him, whereupon he arrived immediately

Sulaiman (a.s.) said to him, "Before I confer with you about my issue, I would like to know why, when I sent the horse, the most honorable of

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.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ٢, pg. ٣٥٨ -١

all animals after man, you did not arrive, but when I sent the dog, the most vile of all the animals, you presented yourself immediately?"

The porcupine replied, "The horse, in spite of being an honorable animal, does not possess loyalty, whereas the dog, despite being the most despicable, possesses it; if it receives a loaf of bread from someone, it would remain loyal to him all throughout its life."

Sulaiman (a.s.) then said, "A bowl containing the Water of Life has been sent to me and I have been given the choice of either accepting it or refusing it. All the others have advised me to drink it in order that I become eternal."

The porcupine said, "Is this Water of Life only for you or are your children, family and friends permitted to consume it too?"

He said, "No! It is solely for me."

The porcupine then advised, "It is advisable that you do not accept it, for when you acquire a long life, all your children, relatives and friends shall depart before you, every passing day bringing you face to face with misfortune and sorrow thereby making your life miserable for you.Sulaiman (a.s.) approved of this advice and heeding it, returned the Water of Life.(١)

١٩. Sickness

point

Allah, the Wise, says:

وَ إِذاَ مَرِضْتُ فَهُو يشْفِينِ

(And when I am sick, then He restores me to health)(٢)

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) has said:

اَشَدُّ مِنَ الْفاَقهِ مَرَضُ الْبَدَن

(More calamitous than poverty is the sickness of the body)(٣)

Short Explanation

One of the treasures of Paradise, which

١- Jawaame' al-Hikaayaat, pg. ٩٥.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Shua'raa (٢۶), vs. ٨٠.

٣- Nahjul Balaghah (of Faidh al-Islam), pg. ١٢٧٠.

reaches a Mu'min in this world, is sickness. If a Mu'min, occasionally and unintentionally, falters and commits sins, God does not like him to return to Him carrying the burden of his sins; He thus afflicts him with illness in order that his sins .are forgiven

A person who suffers from illness, beseeches and supplicates to God to restore his good health and God likes this state of a sick person, for He desires His servant to converse and communicate with Him. At times, God afflicts a person with sickness in .order to elevate him in spiritual rank and status

The best amongst those who are ill is one who exercises patience in this suffering, conceals his pain and desists from complaining about his disease to others until he .regains his health and acquires the maximum reward ordained for him

The Rank of a Worshipper who Suffers from Illness (۱

One day, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) raised his head towards the heavens and then laughed. One of his companions asked him the reason for his laughter to which the :Prophet (s.a.w.) replied saying

My laughter was out of my astonishment. Two angels had descended from the" heavens to record the deeds of a righteous Mu'min. They always found him on his prayer mat, engaged in worship, but this time, they noticed that he was not there. He was in his bed, having been afflicted with sickness. They ascended towards the heavens and said to God: O' Lord! We did not find Your servant in his usual place of

.worship but instead, found him lying on his bed in a state of sickness

God said to them: Until he regains his health, record for him all acts of worship and deeds of goodness that he used to perform when healthy. It is necessary for Us, for as long as he remains in the captivity (of sickness), to grant him rewards of all the .(good deeds that he used to perform, when possessing soundness of health"(۱

!My Daughter has Never Fallen Ill (۲

Once, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) sought a lady's hand in marriage. Her father began :praising her and while enumerating her virtues, he uttered

".From the time she was born till today, she has never fallen sick"

.As soon as the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) heard this, he immediately left the gathering

Later, he said, "There is no goodness in an entity which, like a zebra, never falls sick. Diseases and misfortunes are God's gifts to His servants that should they ever become negligent of Him, diseases and misfortunes serve to make people mindful of (Him." (۲

Patience in Sickness (۳

:Abu Muhammad Riqqi says

Once, I arrived in the presence of Imam Ridha (a.s.) and greeted him. He replied to my .greetings, inquired after my health and began to converse with me

In the course of the conversation, all of a sudden he said, "O' Abu Muhammad! Every Mu'min, whom God afflicts with a misfortune and who exhibits patience over it, shall ".surely come to possess the rank and recompense of a martyr in the eyes of God

I wondered, "In what connection

.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۶, pg. ۱۳۰; Tafsir Nur al-Thaqalain, vol. ۵, pg. ۶۸ -۱

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ٢, pg. ١٨٠ -٢

did the Imam (a.s.) speak this? We had not been talking about misfortunes and calamities for the Imam (a.s.) to have suddenly come up with this kind of speech?"

I bid farewell to the Imam (a.s.) and proceeded towards my friends and fellow travellers, when suddenly I experienced a pain in my leg. I passed the night in great pain and when morning dawned, I noticed that my legs had become inflamed. After a period, this inflammation became more severe. I remembered the speech of Imam Ridha (a.s.) in which he had recommended patience in the face of misfortune and how I had thought it to be out of place then.

In this state I reached Madinah, but there, a large wound developed in my leg, oozing pus. The pain was so excruciating that I could not be at peace. I then realized that the Imam (a.s.) had visualized such a phenomenon when he had spoken to me and advised me to keep calm by means of patience. For ten months, I was bed-ridden as a result of this sickness.

The narrator says: After a period, Abu Muhammad regained his health only to fall ill once again, eventually passing away in that sickness.(۱)

۴) Imam Sajjad helps the Lepers

Once, Imam Sajjad (a.s.) encountered some lepers sitting on the roadside and eating their food. Greeting them, he passed by, when all of a sudden he stopped and said to himself:

"God does not like the haughty ones."

Having said this, he retraced his

۱- Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۶۶; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۴۹, pg. ۵۱.

steps and approaching the lepers, said, “Presently, I am in a state of fasting (and thus unable to sit down and share your food). (However) I invite you to come to my house and be my guests.”

They accepted the offer and went to his house, where the Imam (a.s.) fed them and helped them by giving them some money.(١)

5) The Sick Person’s Debt Paid

Usaamah Ibn Zaid was one of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Once, he fell ill and so Imam Husain (a.s.) paid him a visit. Approaching him, the Imam observed him to be greatly disturbed, repeatedly moaning and exhibiting great anguish.

The Imam (a.s.) said to him, “Brother, what causes you to be so disturbed and worried?”

“I am burdened by a debt of sixty thousand dinars.” he replied.

The Imam (a.s.) consoled him by saying, “ I take the responsibility of clearing your debt.”

Usaamah persisted, “I fear I may die before my debt is repaid.”

The Imam (a.s.) said, “Do not worry! I shall clear your debt before your death.” Having said this, Imam Husain (a.s.) ordered his debt to be paid off immediately.(٢)

٢٠. Parents

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

فَلَا تَقُل لَهُما اُفٍّ وَ لَا تَنْهَرهُما

(Say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them)(٣)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said:

بِرُّ الْوَالِدَینِ اَفضَلُ مِنَ الصَّلاهِ وَ الصَّومِ وَ الْحَجِّ وَ الْعُمْرَهِ وَ الْجِهَادِ فِی سَبِیلِ اللهِ

Kindness towards parents is better than prayers, fasts, Hajj, U'mrah and jihad in the) (path of Allah.)(۴

Short Explanation

In (several places in) the Qur'an, God has

p: ۱۲۸

۱- Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Kuneem, pg. ۳۸.

۲- Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۹۳; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۱۰, pg. ۴۳.

۳- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Israa (۱۷), vs. ۲۳.

۴- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۶۴.

spoken about the very subtle issue of 'kindness towards the parents', attaching such immense importance to it that He has even said: Say not to them (so much as) "Ugh" nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word.

It is evident from this that it is not only forbidden to annoy parents in any way but it is obligatory to exhibit goodness and kindness towards them. People who hurt their parents, even occasionally, must seek their forgiveness and happiness before they suffer the evil consequences. They should remember that their children, in turn, would ill-treat them too.

As for the repercussions in the Hereafter, the holy Prophet has said that if for every instance of hurting others one door of Hell opens up for man, then two doors of Hell will open up for he who causes inconvenience to his parents.(١)

The Mother's Pleasure (١

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) approached a youth who was dying and said to him: "O' Youth! Say 'Laa ilaaha illallah",but the youth's tongue would not move and he was unable to speak the sentence.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)asked the gathering crowd if the youth's mother was present. A lady, who stood near the head of the dying person, stepped forward and said she was his mother.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked her if she was pleased with her son to which she responded: "No. I have not spoken to him for the past six years."

He said, "O' Lady! Forgive him and be pleased with him."

The lady

١- Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ١٢٩.

"!agreed and said, “For your sake, I forgive him. May God be pleased with him

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) again turned to the youth and asked him to testify to the Unity of God and this time, having procured his mother’s pleasure, the youth was able .to do so

"?The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked him, “O’ Youth! What do you witness at this moment

He said, “I see an extremely ugly person who has a foul odour coming from him and ".who is waiting to strangle me

The Prophet (s.a.w.) then instructed the youth to recite the following supplication: O’ He, Who accepts trivial (good) deeds and disregards the immense sins! Accept from me my trivial (good) deeds and disregard my immense sins, for you are the All-Forgiving and the All-Merciful.

When the youth had recited this supplication, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him .and his holy progeny) asked him once more what he was witnessing

He replied, “I now see a man with a luminous and pleasing appearance. He is wearing beautiful clothes and possesses an enchanting fragrance. He is exhibiting kindness (andcourtesy towards me”.(Having said this, the youth passed away).(۱)

The Companion of Prophet Musa in Paradise (۲

:Once, while conversing with God, Prophet Musa (a.s.) requested

".O’ Lord! I desire to meet the person, who is to be my companion in Paradise“

Jibraeel descended and informed him that his companion was to be a butcher who lived in a certain place. Prophet Musa (a.s.) set out in search of him and arrived at his shop, when

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.Darshai Az Zindagi-e-Payaambar, pg. ۱۱۶; Al-Amaali (Sheikh Al-Tusi), vol. ۱, pg. ۶۳ -۱

.he noticed a youth, resembling a night watchman, busy selling meat

When night fell, the youth took some meat and proceeded towards his house. Musa .(a.s.) followed him till they reached there

Musa (a.s.) approached the youth and said, “Would you not like to have a guest?” The .youth willingly agreed and took him inside

Musa (a.s.) watched the youth preparing some food. When he had finished, he brought down a large basket from the upper storey. Bringing out an old and wizened woman from inside it, he washed her and then proceeded to feed her with his own hands. When the youth was about to carry the basket back to its original place, Musa (a.s.) noticed the old lady’s lips move as she mumbled something incomprehensible. .The youth then brought food for him and both of them ate their dinner

”?Musa inquired, “What is your relation with this old lady

The youth replied, “She is my mother and since my financial state does not allow me ”.to purchase a slave-girl for her, I myself strive to serve and look after her

Musa questioned further, “What did your mother mumble before you took her ”?upstairs

He responded, “Whenever I wash her and feed her, she prays: May God forgive you ”.and place you in the company and in the rank of Prophet Musa (a.s.) in Paradise

Hearing this, Musa (a.s.) said, “O’ Youth! I give you glad tidings; God has accepted your mother’s prayers and Jibraeel has informed me that

(you shall be my companion in Paradise!"(١)

The Curse of a Mother (٣

In the tribe of Bani Israel, there lived a pious person by the name of Jareeh, who used to engage himself in God's worship, in his monastery. One day, his mother approached him while he was busy in prayer and, as a result, he did not respond to .her. She approached him for a second time, but again, Jareeh did not answer

When this happened for the third time, she became angry and cursed him saying, "I "!pray to God that He does not help you

The next day a prostitute came up to his monastery and giving birth to a child there, :declared

".This is Jareeh's child whom I have given birth to"

This created uproar among the people, who thought: "The very person, who used to rebuke us for fornication, has committed it himself." The king ordered him to be sent .to the gallows

When Jareeh's mother came to know of this, she began beating her face in distress whereupon he said to her, "Keep quiet, for it is due to your curse that I find myself in ".this predicament

"?The people asked him, "O' Jareeh! How can we know that you speak the truth

.He told them to bring the child to him

When the child was brought, he prayed and then questioned the child, "Who is your father?" The child, with divine power and permission, said, "My father is such and such ".a shepherd belonging to such and such a tribe

This incident

۱- Faadhil Kaashifi (Tuhfa-e-Shaahi; Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۱, pg. ۶۸).

saved Jareeh's life after which he vowed never to separate from his mother and to serve her throughout her life.(1)

The Truthful Barber (4

The distinguished scholar, Sheikh Baqir Kadhimi, who lived near Najaf-e-Ashraf, narrates that a truthful barber, once related the following story:

I had an old father, whom I served diligently. I exercised such great care never to be neglectful towards him, that I would even place water for him in the toilet and remain in wait outside till he emerged. All throughout (the week) I would be watchful of him, except on Wednesday evenings when I would proceed to Masjid-e-Sahlah hoping to meet Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

One Wednesday I was very busy and did not find a spare moment until it was almost sunset. Nevertheless, I set off towards Masjid-e-Sahlah alone in the dark.

It was a moonlit night and I still had one third of the journey to cover when suddenly I observed an Arab, seated on a horse, coming towards me. I said to myself, "This Arab is surely going to loot me", but when he had come closer, he spoke in the local dialect, and sought to know where I was heading for.

I told him that I intended to go to Masjid-e-Sahlah, whereupon he inquired if I had anything with me to eat. When I replied that I did not, he spoke with some sternness, and said:

"You have some food in your pocket."

Putting my hand into my pocket, I found some raisins, which I

۱- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۵۴۸; Hayaat Al-Quloob, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۸۲.

.had purchased for my son but had forgotten to give him

The Arab then said: "I recommend you to serve your father", and, repeating this three .times, he suddenly disappeared

It was only later that I realized that it was Imam Mahdi (a.s.) himself that I had seen and that he was not pleased that I stopped serving my father, even for the purpose of (going to Masjid-e-Sahlah on Wednesday evenings.(١

Striking the Father (۵

Abu Quhafah, the father of Abu Bakr, was one of the enemies of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Once, he abused the Prophet (s.a.w.) and so, his son Abu Bakr took hold of him .and pounded him against the door

When the news of this incident reached the ears of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w), he called :for Abu Bakr and asked

"?Did you do such a thing to your father"

.Abu Bakr replied in the affirmative

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) then said, "Go away, but from now on, do not behave in this (manner with your father." (٢

.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ٢, pg. ۴٧۶; Najm al-Thaaqib -١

Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١٠, pg. ١٢٨; Wasaail al-Shia'h, vol. ١, pg. ١١۵ (Old - ٢ (Publication

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

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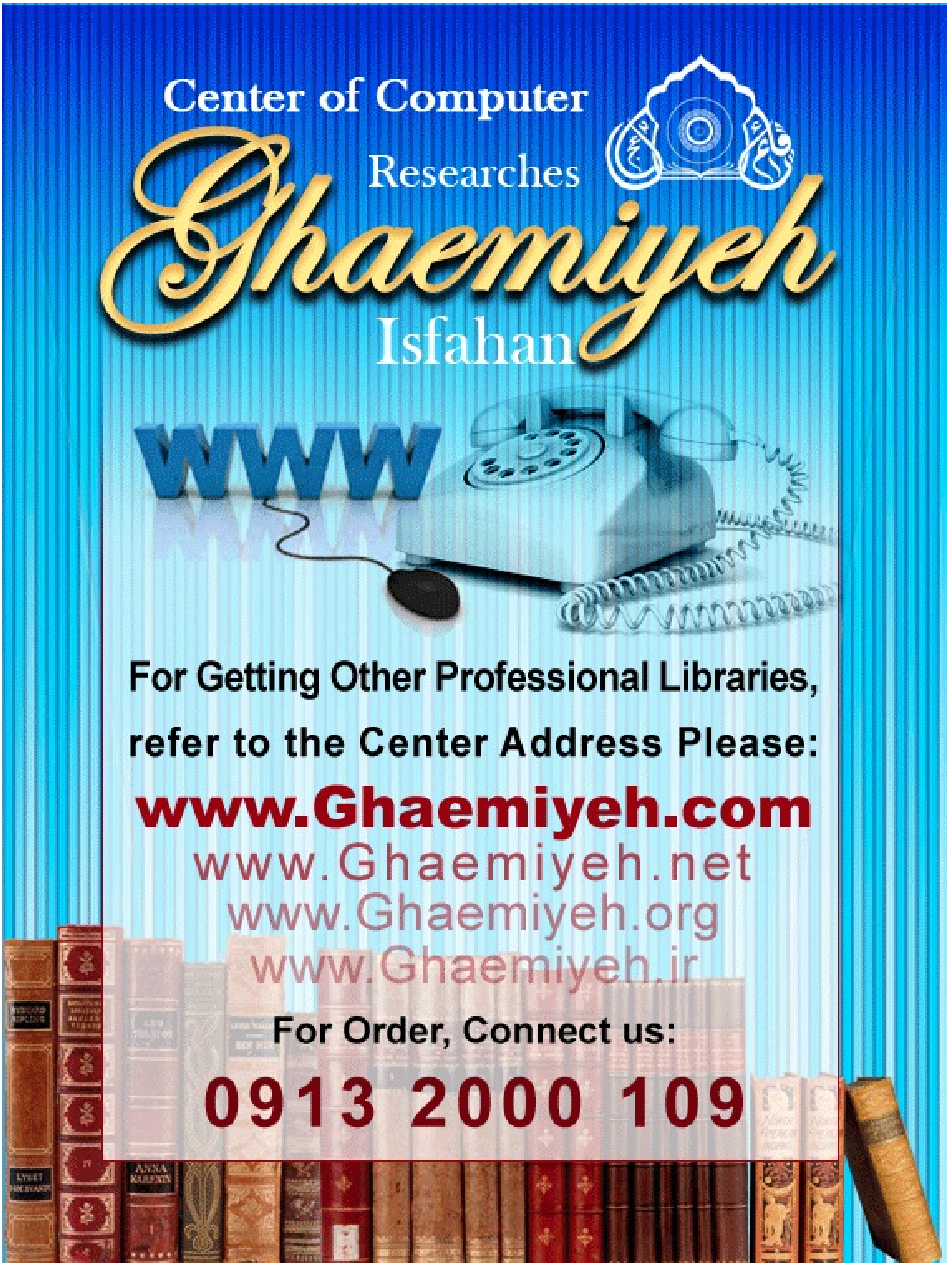
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We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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